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Mr King
April 12

The thing is, however, that we should give Professor von Kries the opportunity to write an article on the subject in the G. Z. and G. Z. Prof. Kries is the one who is responsible for the article.

Fair Draft

14 Aug: 1901.

Mr. Whitehead

to: 90

Secret

Dei

The Japanese Minister

Recd by bag ap: 16.

Anglo-French Agreement
Congratulates H. M. Govt on
Satisfactory conclusion of-
Favourable opinion produced
in France

The King ✓
Prince of Wales ✓
A. H. H. Balfour
Hon. Sec. of State for India ✓
C. H.

Facsimile of Minutes by H.M. King Edward VII,
Volume II, pp. 92 and 4co.



British Documents on the Origins of the War

1898-1914

Edited by G. P. GOOCH, D.Litt., F.B.A., and
HAROLD TEMPERLEY, Litt.D., F.B.A.

Vol. I The End of British Isolation

LONDON:

PRINTED AND PUBLISHED BY HIS MAJESTY'S STATIONERY OFFICE

To be purchased directly from H.M. STATIONERY OFFICE at the following addresses :
Adastral House, Kingsway, London, W.C.2 ; 120, George Street, Edinburgh ;
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VOLUMES I AND II

From the Occupation of Kiao-Chau
to the
Making of the Anglo-French Entente
December 1897—April 1904

VOL. I
The End of British Isolation

Edited by
G. P. GOOCH and HAROLD TEMPERLEY
with the assistance of LILLIAN M. PENSON

228368

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Foreword to Volumes I and II.

THE decision to publish a selection from the British Documents dealing with the origins of the War was taken by Mr. Ramsay MacDonald, Prime Minister and Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, in the summer of 1924. It was confirmed and announced by Mr., now Sir, Austen Chamberlain in a letter of the 28th November, 1924 (published in "The Times" on the 3rd December), addressed to Dr. R. W. Seton-Watson. Some extracts from this letter were published by us in the Foreword to Volume XI, and it need only be said here that the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs referred to "impartiality and accuracy" as being the necessary qualifications for any work which the Editors were to publish.

It was decided to begin with the year 1898 in view of the fact that certain influential members of the British Cabinet, alarmed by the hostility of France and Russia, then desired to substitute a policy of alliances for the traditional principle of "splendid isolation." It was felt, however, that the years covered in the first two volumes could be treated in a more summary fashion than would be desirable after 1904. The Editors cannot suppose that they have not omitted some important documents or despatches in a period so crowded with events; yet the most significant occurrences, such as the formation of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance and the Franco-British *Entente*, have been treated in great detail. Negotiations, on the other hand, which were adequately described in official publications at the time, such as those concerned with the troubles in Macedonia or in Crete, have been for the most part omitted.

The official records of Lord Salisbury's administrations were described by Sir Eyre Crowe in a memorandum of the 1st January, 1907, as being "sadly incomplete," all the most important business having been transacted under the cover of "private" correspondence. He also expressed a doubt as to whether "a methodical study of our relations with Germany during that interesting period" was possible from the official records alone. Lord Sanderson, however, questioned this view at the time, and considered that the story of the main transactions could be found in the official records. It would appear that the documents are fuller after the fall of Bismarck; but there is practically no evidence in our official records as to the first Anglo-German *rapprochement* which began in March, 1898, and which has been described at length from the German archives in Volume XIV of *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette*. The explanation is that this transaction was in the hands of Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, then Secretary of State for the Colonies, and was thus treated as a private matter. The Editors are, however, authorised to state that Mr. J. L. Garvin is preparing the official biography of Mr. Chamberlain, and that this publication is to be expected shortly. The *Life of Robert Marquis of Salisbury*, by Lady Gwendolen Cecil, will be completed in due course. The publication of the private papers of these two statesmen should therefore fill up the gaps. With regard to the Anglo-German negotiations of 1901 it is interesting to know that Sir Eyre Crowe minuted "that the most important of these [transactions] were recorded," and the Editors are in agreement with this conclusion. From 1901 onwards it would in fact appear that the archives are reasonably complete.

In accordance with the practice of the Foreign Office already observed in the case of Volume XI of this series, the documents in the present volumes containing information supplied or opinions expressed by certain Foreign Governments have been communicated to them for their agreement. The response has been generally satisfactory.

The Editors have inserted asterisks to indicate gaps or omissions in documents. As a rule these gaps are due to the unimportance of the matter omitted, in which case an indication of subject is usually given. In a few instances, they are due to a desire to consult the susceptibilities of the persons or of the Governments concerned; but the Editors have omitted nothing which they consider essential to the understanding of the history of the period. In addition to despatches and telegrams there are memoranda and minutes which are properly official documents. No objection has been raised by His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the publication in these volumes of any documents of the above kind, nor to the publication of certain similar papers or of private letters, which are not properly official documents, but which are preserved in the Foreign Office.

His Majesty the King has graciously consented to the publication of Minutes by King Edward. The Editors have also to acknowledge with thanks information or advice given by Lady Gwendolen Cecil with reference to the papers of the Marquess of Salisbury, by Sir Austen Chamberlain, the present Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, with reference to the papers of the late Mr. Joseph Chamberlain, by the late Marquess of Lansdowne, by the Earl of Balfour, by Sir Ernest Satow, and by Sir Valentine Chirol. Such private papers as remain of Lord (Sir T. H.) Sanderson, (Permanent Under-Secretary of the Foreign Office during the years 1894 to 1906), have been at their disposal. Sir Ernest Satow has most kindly offered his private correspondence during the period, and a number of his private letters and of those of his correspondents are printed, which throw a most valuable light on British policy in the Far East. Permission was given by the late Marquess of Lansdowne to publication of two of his letters to Sir Ernest Satow. In conclusion the Editors desire to acknowledge the friendly assistance and advice of various officials at the Foreign Office, among whom they would like to mention the Librarian, Mr. Stephen Gaselee, C.B.E., Mr. J. W. Headlam-Morley, C.B.E., Historical Adviser, who arranged Volume XI for them, and Mr. J. W. Field; of the officials of the Public Record Office in London; and of Mr. W. S. Wright, who is in charge of the Diplomatic and Embassy Archives at Cambridge.

G. P. GOOCH.

HAROLD TEMPERLEY.

July 1927.

Note on Arrangement of Documents, &c.

The arrangement of the material in the present volumes differs in some particulars from that followed in Volume XI, since they cover a period of years, and the documents printed are a selection from the very large number in existence. The choice has been determined by the desire to provide as far as possible a full account of the principal incidents affecting the relations of the Great Powers, and the documents have been grouped in chapters and sub-sections accordingly. Within these chapters and sub-sections chronological order has been the rule followed. There are, however, a few exceptions. Some chapters include official memoranda or summaries reviewing events at a later date. These do not conform to the chronological rule, and have been printed in small type for purposes of differentiation. Similar methods have been used when extracts from documents have been grouped to illustrate a special point.

Chronological order as applied in these volumes is taken to be the date of despatch of the document, whether it is incoming or outgoing, since this method appears to the editors to be best calculated to secure a consecutive history of events.

Most of the documents are taken from the official series of Foreign Office papers in the Public Record Office. For the period 1898–1905 they are classified mainly by country (F.O. France, &c.) and within countries by years. For each year the diplomatic documents are separated from the commercial and other classes. Within the diplomatic class there are volumes of outgoing and incoming despatches, outgoing and incoming telegrams, communications with the Foreign Ambassador ("Domestic") and with other Government Departments ("Various"). Papers relating to certain subjects have been specially treated. Some have been placed together in a miscellaneous series (F.O. General), as in the case of The Hague Peace Conference. In other instances all papers relating to a certain geographical area have been placed together, as with African affairs (after 1899) and the affairs of Morocco. Correspondence with the British representative at Paris or elsewhere appears in these cases under F.O. Africa or F.O. Morocco. A third method was to separate the correspondence relating to a special aspect of affairs from the other papers of the country concerned, thus removing them from chronological sequence. This was the case with despatches on African affairs down to 1899, which appear in special series of F.O. France (Africa), F.O. Germany (Africa), &c.

Some papers which seemed to be missing from the Foreign Office archives have been supplied from the records of the Embassies. In such cases the reference is given to volumes of this series (*e.g.*, F.O. 179/348). In a few other instances the only text found has been that printed either immediately or later for the confidential use of the Foreign Office (*i.e.*, "Confidential Print"). These include some Foreign Office memoranda for which a reference number is given (*e.g.*, 8883*). A few documents relating to the Anglo-German negotiations of 1901 were in a special file at the Foreign Office for which no reference number exists. The same is true of the text of the so-called "Windsor Treaty." The private papers of Lord Sanderson now in the Foreign Office are referred to as "Sanderson MSS."

The text printed is in every case verbally identical with that given in the source whose reference appears at the head of the document. The text of out-going despatches is therefore that of the draft retained by the Foreign Office, except where it is taken from the Embassy records. In the case of telegrams the original text is given wherever possible. In those cases where the original has not been found, the official paraphrase is reproduced, and is indicated by the letter "P" after the number of the telegram.

The spelling of proper names, capitalisation and punctuation will in future volumes be identical with that of the original document. In these volumes this has not been found possible. The text was printed in many cases from the "Confidential Print," and it was not discovered until after the documents were in type that the "Print" followed rules of its own in these respects. All verbal inaccuracies in the "Print" have been corrected, but it was not possible to alter the spelling, capitalisation and punctuation in all cases. It may be well to mention here that in the original records the spelling, and in particular that of proper names, is in no way consistent. For instance, Mouraviev is sometimes spelt in two different ways in successive despatches by the same writer; but it was thought undesirable to correct these and similar inconsistencies.

Plan of Volumes I and II.

Volume I.

Chapter I deals with Russia and the Far East from 1897 to 1899, beginning with the seizure of Kiao-Chau by Germany. It then describes the British overture to Russia between January and March 1898, a story which has never been told in detail and has hitherto been almost unknown. This approach was terminated by Russia's seizure of Port Arthur. The last part of the chapter illustrates the retort of Great Britain to the action of Russia—the British occupation of Wei-Hai-Wei—and the attitude of Japan. Some extracts from the private correspondence of Sir Ernest Satow, at that time British Minister at Tokio, are added.

The relations of Great Britain, Germany and Portugal during 1898 and 1899 are surveyed in *Chapter II*. The first part deals with the proposed loan to Portugal and the Anglo-German negotiations in this connexion. The text of the Secret Convention of the 30th August, 1898, first published in *Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette* XIV. 347–55, is reproduced. The latter part of the chapter traces the negotiations with Portugal after this event and concludes with the Anglo-Portuguese secret declaration of the 14th October, 1899, often erroneously called the "Treaty of Windsor." The chapter ends with the visit of the British Channel Fleet to Lisbon in 1900 when British obligations to Portugal were indicated in official toasts.

Chapter III deals with Anglo-German friction in Samoa, and incidentally throws light on the Manila incident between Germany and the United States in 1898. The last part of the chapter describes the conclusion of the negotiations and the colonial concessions to Germany under the stress of the South African War at the end of 1899.

Anglo-French relations in 1898 form the subject of *Chapter IV*. The first part describes the disputed claims in the region of the Middle Niger, which were amicably settled by the Protocol of the 15th June, 1898. Several of the documents on the Fashoda crisis, which fills the second part of the chapter, were printed, in whole or in part, in Parliamentary Papers; but a full account from the British side is here given for the first time.

Chapter V opens with the delimitation of spheres of influence between Great Britain and France in North Africa, culminating in the agreement of the 21st March, 1899. The second part explains the refusal of Great Britain to accede to French wishes in regard to Muscat.

The first Hague Peace Conference of 1899 is described in *Chapter VI*. The instructions to the British delegates are printed for the first time; but only a few documents are needed, as nearly all the material was published on its conclusion.

Chapter VII, which covers the period of the South African War, reflects the views of Governments and Peoples on the long struggle and discusses the rumours of intervention or mediation.

Certain aspects of the relations of the Great Powers between 1898 and 1903 are illustrated in *Chapter VIII*. The chief reference is to Italy and the Triple Alliance. The numerous Blue Books dealing with Turkey in Europe and Asia during these years give nearly all the necessary information, but a few dispatches are printed at the end dealing with the Mürzsteg Programme of Turkish reforms, agreed upon between Russia and Austria-Hungary on the 1st October, 1903. This is followed by an important statement of Russian policy in relation to Afghanistan. There is also a comprehensive Memorandum on the Suez Canal between 1895 and 1898.

Volume II.

Chapter IX deals with the Far East (1900–1901). The first section relates to the Anglo-German Agreement of the 5th October, 1900, with reference to China. The interpretation placed on it by the British Government will be found at the end of this section. The circumstances attending Count Waldersee's appointment and conduct as Generalissimo of the Inter-Allied forces have not been touched upon, as the description in Parliamentary Papers is adequate. The affairs of Corea and Manchuria between 1900 and 1901 are next described. The chapter ends with some general comments from the private letters exchanged between Sir Ernest Satow, Sir Thomas Sanderson and the late Marquess of Lansdowne.

The proposals for an Anglo-German alliance in 1901 form the theme of *Chapter X*. There is no trace in the Foreign Office archives of the negotiations of 1898, which were conducted privately. In the correspondence presented in these pages special importance attaches to the Memoranda of Lord Lansdowne of the 24th May and the 11th November, 1901, and to the critical analysis of the negotiations by Lord Salisbury on the 29th May. While the German documents published in the *Grosse Politik* attribute the initiative to Great Britain, the British documents attribute it to Germany.

The negotiations leading to the conclusion of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance in January 1902 are traced in *Chapter XI*. Care has been taken to exhibit the various drafts of the Agreement in parallel columns. The labour expended on this task will, it is hoped, facilitate the work of students by revealing the ideas in the minds of the two Governments and the processes which led to their eventual agreement. Certain minutes indicate King Edward's warm approval of the Agreement.

Anglo-German relations during the years 1902–3 are illustrated in *Chapter XII*. The first section deals with the evacuation of Shanghai (July–December 1902) and restores many passages omitted in the Blue Book on that question; the second with the co-operation of the two Powers in the coercion of Venezuela; the third with the project of the Bagdad Railway, including a précis of despatches on the question from 1899–1903.

Russian policy in the Far East (1903–4) is the subject of *Chapter XIII*. It deals, in particular, with the retention of Manchuria, which led ultimately to the Russo-Japanese War. The despatch of Lord Lansdowne of the 8th February, 1904, is particularly important in this connection.

Chapter XIV contains the views of the British, French and Spanish Governments in regard to Morocco from 1898 to 1903 and reveals the growing interest of France in that country. It forms the prelude to the Anglo-French *rapprochement* which began in 1903.

The story of the making of the Anglo-French Agreements of April 8, 1904, is told at full length in *Chapter XV*. The important part played by Lord Cromer in the long and difficult negotiations is here first revealed. The letter of Lord Lansdowne of the 1st October, 1903, with M. Cambon's reply of the 26th October summarise preceding negotiations, and provide a starting point for the new arrangement. In this case, as in that of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance, care has been taken to print the original French and British drafts side by side with the final text. The chapter ends with some minutes and comments of King Edward on the *Entente*.

Abbreviations.

B.F.S.P.	...	...	...	British and Foreign State Papers.
G.P.	...	...	...	Die Grosse Politik der Europäischen Kabinette.
Accounts and Papers	...			British Parliamentary Papers : Accounts and Papers.

Names of Writers of Minutes, &c.

A.J.B.	=	Mr. A. J. Balfour (now Lord Balfour)		First Lord of the Treasury, 29 June, 1895–11 December, 1905; Prime Minister, 12 July, 1902–11 December, 1905.
F.B.	=	Mr. (later Sir) F. Bertie	... ..	Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1894–1903.
J.C.	=	Mr. J. Chamberlain	... ..	Secretary of State for the Colonies, 1895–1903.
L.	=	The Marquess of Lansdowne	...	Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 12 November, 1900–11 December, 1905.
S.	=	The Marquess of Salisbury	... ..	Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 29 June, 1895–12 November, 1900; Prime Minister, 29 June, 1895–12 July, 1902.
T.H.S.	=	Sir T. H. (later Lord) Sanderson	...	Permanent Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1894–1906.
F.H.V.	=	Mr. (later Sir) F. H. Villiers	...	Assistant Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, 1896–1906.

Minute by King Edward.

(This is attached to the following despatch.)

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne, No. 20 of January 31, 1902. No. 337, p. 272.

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CHAPTER I.

RUSSIA AND THE FAR EAST, 1897-9.

I.—THE GERMAN SEIZURE OF KIAO-CHAU.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The evidence in *G.P. XIV*, I, (1895-1898), shows that German designs for a coaling station in the Far East were formulated in March 1895 (*ib.* 5-7), and that proceedings were opened with the Chinese Government in December 1896 (*ib.* 49-50). The crucial date was the 11th August, 1897, when the German and Russian Emperors met (*ib.* 58-60) and Czar Nicholas agreed to the Kaiser's demand for Kiao-chau, but with some heart-burnings (*v.* Sir F. Lascelles' No. 38 of the 2nd February, 1898, below pp. 4-5). The German squadron was actually ordered to Kiao-chau on the 6th November, after the news had arrived of the murder of two German Catholic missionaries in South Shantung (the 4th November), *v. G.P. XIV*, I, 67-74. It took possession on the 14th November.]

No. 1.

Memorandum by Mr. J. A. C. Tilley.

Memorandum respecting the Relations between Russia and Great Britain, 1892-1904.

(No. 8338.)

(Extract.)

Foreign Office, January 14, 1905.

Immediately on the conclusion of the peace between China and Japan the subject of the loan required by China for paying the war indemnity and other purposes had become prominent. To the first enquiries made to them by Her Majesty's Government, the Chinese Government said that they intended to raise about £35,000,000, of which they had promised to borrow £8,000,000 from Russia. France and Germany had also been anxious to lend money. Her Majesty's Government thereupon informed the Russian, French and German Governments that as British trade with China was far larger than that of any other Power, they were necessarily deeply interested in the matter, but that they only desired a scheme by which all parties concerned might be satisfied.

Meanwhile, negotiations for the Russian loan were proceeding at Paris, and on the 11th June a contract was signed for a loan of £16,000,000, guaranteed by Russia, on the security of a prior lien on the Chinese customs, Russia to have equal participation in any additional security pledged in a future loan.

The British and German Ministers at Peking opposed this loan, but the Agreement was signed on the 5th July, 1895. However, the only stipulation was that China should contract no further loan for six months, and the Agreement did not give Russia any power to interfere with the Chinese maritime customs unless China failed to meet her engagement punctually. M. de Witte admitted to the Austrian Ambassador at St. Petersburg that he was in hopes that this contingency might occur.

During the years 1895-96 Russia took two other forward steps in China: she established the Russo-Chinese Bank, with headquarters at St. Petersburg and branches at Shanghai and elsewhere in China, and with power, not only to do ordinary banking business, but, with the consent of the Chinese Government, to collect taxes, coin money, and obtain grants of Railway and Telegraph Concessions; she also obtained permission to carry her Trans-Siberian Railway across Manchuria.

In counteraction of the Russian advances, Great Britain arranged a joint loan to China of £16,000,000. The Agreement was signed on the 23rd March, 1896, the service of the loan being charged on the maritime customs and priority given as regards both principal and interest over all future loans until the whole should be redeemed.

These two loans—the Russian and Anglo-German—did not satisfy the requirements of the Chinese Government, and a further loan of £8,000,000 or £16,000,000 was thought necessary. Negotiations were accordingly opened with the Anglo-German Syndicate, which issued the 1896 Loan, and were carried on during 1897. The Syndicate could not accept the terms then offered

[*ED. NOTE.*—The various diplomatic instruments, &c., are given in full in *Treaties between Great Britain and China and between China and Foreign Powers and Orders in Council, Rules, Regulations, Acts of Parliament, Decrees, &c.* (1689-1907) in force on the 1st January, 1908. 3rd edition by G. E. P. Hertslet and E. Parkes. 2 vols. (1908).]

by China, but on a report that Russia had offered to guarantee a further loan, Her Majesty's Government offered such easy terms for a loan of £16,000,000 that the Chinese Government assented to their conditions, one being the opening of Talienwan as a Treaty port to foreign trade.

Before the matter could be definitely arranged, the Russian Chargé d'Affaires protested to the Chinese Government against the loan, in the name of his Government, on the ground that it would disturb the balance of influence in China, supporting his protest by threats of a military movement across the frontier, and the French also threatened action.

On the 12th January, 1898, Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg was told by Count Mouravieff that the Russian fleet was wintering at Port Arthur as a temporary measure only. In the course of the same interview Sir N. O'Connor called attention to the efforts of the Russian Minister at Peking to oust Mr. Kinder, a British subject, from the position of Chief Engineer of the railways in North China, which he was filling with great ability.

On the same day the Russian Ambassador in London told Lord Salisbury that the presence of two of Her Majesty's ships at Port Arthur "had produced a bad impression in Russia." Lord Salisbury replied that they had a Treaty right to enter the port, but that as a matter of fact they had been sent there by the Admiral without orders from home and would, in the ordinary course, soon move to another anchorage. Very soon afterwards the Commander-in-Chief on the China Station was told that there was no necessity to keep a ship permanently at Port Arthur, and that Her Majesty's ship "Iphigenia" might be withdrawn. The Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs told Her Majesty's Ambassador on the 19th that the presence of two gun-boats at Port Arthur "had been thought so unfriendly in Russia as to set afloat rumours of war." Sir N. O'Connor replied that he could not conceive how the exercise of a right secured by the Treaty of Tien-tsin could be construed as an unfriendly act.

On the 17th January Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg had been instructed to ask M. de Witte whether it was not possible for England and Russia to work together in China, and the overtures had been favourably received by the Russian Government. Lord Salisbury then proposed that the valley of the Hoang-Ho and the territories to the north of it should be regarded as subject to Russian influence, and the Yang-tsze Valley as subject to British influence. The Russian Government seemed disposed to agree, but at this point they brought forward the question of the conditions attached to the proposed British loan, and in particular the opening of Talienwan. Russia made a counter-demand for a lease of Talienwan and Port Arthur as a terminus for the Manchurian Railway. Her Majesty's Government declined to assent unless Russia had something to offer in exchange, which she had not.

Meanwhile, the Yamen announced to Her Majesty's Minister on the 2nd February that they had decided not to borrow from either Great Britain or Russia.

Certain concessions were almost at once obtained by Her Majesty's Government from China in compensation, though not ostensibly so, for this refusal to accept a British loan. They included a promise not to alienate any territories of the Yang-tsze provinces, and an assurance that, while British trade preponderated over that of other Powers, the post of Inspector-General of Maritime Customs should continue to be held by an Englishman.

These concessions having been secured, both the loan and the understanding with Russia became matters of comparative indifference to Her Majesty's Government and the negotiations dropped. Eventually, much to the dissatisfaction of Russia, a loan was arranged with the Anglo-German Syndicate, and was secured on the unpledged balance of the maritime customs and on the *li-kin* of certain districts in the Yang-tsze Valley and the Province of Chiekiang; these *li-kin* were placed under the control of the Inspector-General of Maritime Customs.

Russia persisted in her demand for Port Arthur, but Count Mouravieff informed Her Majesty's Ambassador that the Emperor had authorised him to give the assurance that both Port Arthur and Talienwan would be opened to foreign trade like other Chinese ports; shortly afterwards the Minister formally repeated this assurance.

The Russian Government were then informed that Her Majesty's Government would not regard with any dissatisfaction the lease by them of an ice-free commercial harbour, connected by rail with the Trans-Siberian Railway, but that the occupation of Port Arthur, which was useless for commercial purposes and valuable only from its strategic position, would arouse grave objections; it would be looked on in the Far East as a standing menace to Peking and the beginning of the partition of China. The Russian Government would not admit that the occupation of Port Arthur was an attack upon the integrity of China, or that it injured other Powers in any way; in fact, it was England alone that made difficulties and stood, as usual, in the way of Russia. A few days later, Russia occupied Port Arthur, under an Agreement of the 27th March, but in announcing the fact made no mention of its being open to foreign commerce. On being questioned, Count Mouravieff denied that his "assurances" referred to anything but an engagement to respect the Treaty of Tien-tsin, under which British ships of war were at liberty to visit all Chinese ports, buy provisions, procure water, and make repairs. Upon this Great Britain, in self-defence, obtained from China a lease of Wei-hai Wei for so long a period as Port Arthur remained in the occupation of Russia.

On the 7th June, 1898, a preliminary Agreement was signed at Peking between the Chinese Administrator of the Railways of North China and the Hong Kong and Shanghai Bank, representing the British and Chinese Corporation, for a loan of £2,300,000, for the extension of the

Peking-Tien-tsin-Shanhaikwan Railway to Newchang, the portion of the line inside the Great Wall being mortgaged as part security.

The Russian Government at once protested against the mortgage, but eventually withdrew their opposition on the assurance that the line would remain Chinese; and an exchange of notes took place on the 28th April, 1899, which further provided that, in future, Great Britain would not seek Railway Concessions to the north of the Great Wall, nor obstruct applications on the part of Russia in that region, and that Russia would observe the same attitude in the Yang-tsze region.

No. 2.

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Japan 485.

(No. 245.)

My Lord,

Tokyo, D. December 1, 1897.

R. January 3, 1898.

The news of the occupation of the Kiao-chau Bay by the German squadron on the 14th ultimo, and the list of demands presented to the Chinese Government as telegraphed from Peking to this country caused a considerable amount of excitement here. The native press teemed with articles denouncing what was considered to be a most high-handed proceeding, and one journal went so far as to insinuate that the seizure of that port was only part of a programme agreed upon by European Powers, including Great Britain, for the partition of China. It was suggested that Germany, abandoning negotiations supposed to have been carried on for the cession of San-sha-ssü as a naval station by way of payment for her assistance in obtaining the restitution of Liao-tung, had determined upon taking possession of Kiao-chau, with or without the consent of Russia.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs has been confined to his house for the past fortnight, and I have not been able to see him. But the Vice-Minister, Mr. Komura, expressed to me a good deal of apprehension as to the ultimate outcome of the steps taken by Germany.

The seizure of Kiao-chau had followed so immediately upon the news of the murder of the German missionaries, that it was difficult not to believe that there was some ulterior motive underneath it.

The general opinion in Japanese official circles seems to be that the proceeding was unnecessarily hasty, and that a prolonged or possibly permanent occupation of such an important strategic point by a Western Power would imperil the peace of the Far East.

The latest news, however, is to the effect that the murder of the missionaries became known on the 6th November at least eight days before the German squadron took possession, and the tone of the press has become much more moderate. At the same time the Japanese Government seem to be carefully watching the course of events, without at present making up their minds as to whether they shall intervene.

A report has indeed been circulated that two Japanese men-of-war will be sent to Kiao-chau, but has not been confirmed.

In answer to the inquiries that have been put to me by Japanese, I have confined myself to remarking that China will act wisely in coming to a speedy agreement with regard to reparation, and that any ill-advised resistance on her part would inevitably lead to demands of a more serious character.

I have, &c.

ERNEST SATOW.

[ED. NOTE.—The arrival of the German squadron at Kiao-chau on the 14th November was followed (G.P. XIV, I, 121) by a communication from Count Muravieff to Germany of the 14th December that a Russian naval squadron had been ordered to Port Arthur and that the German and Russian Governments would work hand-in-hand in the East, a sentiment reciprocated at Berlin the 17th December (*ib.* 122-3).

The cession of Kiao-chau on lease was virtually decided by an exchange of notes between German and Chinese representatives at Peking in the beginning of January 1898. The Treaty, which included railway and mining concessions, was not actually signed till the 6th March. The text was published on the 29th April in the Berlin *Reichsanzeiger* and later in *B.F.S.P.*, XCV, pp. 1005-8.]

No. 3.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.⁽¹⁾

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1436.

(No. 14.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 12, 1898.

The German Ambassador at an interview with me this afternoon spoke at some length in general language about the relations between Germany and England, and claimed that Germany in the conduct of her proceedings in China, had been careful so to take her measures that they should be as little inconvenient as possible to England. His Excellency repeated more than once that whatever else was to be said of the German occupation of Kiao-chau it was clear to him that it could inflict no injury upon England.

I said that the mode in which the purpose of Germany had been attained impressed me more unfavourably than the purpose itself. The Russians had acted up to this point with perfect correctness. I was wholly unable to pay the same compliment to Germany. I admitted that as far as I knew I thought it probable that no great injury had been inflicted upon England, though the relation of the occupation to our Treaty rights in China would require careful consideration. I was, however, quite unable to pass any judgment on the details of the German action, because I did not know what they were. From the first his Excellency had never told me what it was that his Government intended to do, and as far as official information was concerned I still remained entirely ignorant.

His Excellency took no notice of this challenge, and avoided being led into any discussion of the details of the German proceedings or intentions. I renewed the effort to obtain some explanation from him, but without success. The only thing he would tell me was that the Chinese Government had been willing to give more than Germany was disposed to accept. I asked whether it was the intention of the German Government to make any communication on this subject to the other Powers interested in China; his Excellency replied that he had no information on this point.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

(1) [V. G.P., XIV, I, 146, for Count Hatzfeld's account of this interview; previous interviews are recorded in *ib.* 92-4 (the 17th November), 108-10 (the 1st December), 116-7 (the 11th December), all of 1897.]

No. 4.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1437.

(No. 38.)

My Lord.

Berlin, D. February 2, 1898.

R. February 7, 1898.

With reference to my immediately preceding despatch of yesterday's date, I have the honour to report that the Emperor, in referring to Kiao-chau told me that he would tell me exactly what had taken place. After the murder of the German missionaries in China, His Majesty had addressed himself directly to the Emperor of Russia who

had given his consent to the proposals which His Majesty had laid before him. . When, however, the German ships went to Kiao-chau, Count Muravieff who was probably not aware that the consent of the Emperor of Russia had been given, protested strongly and used language which seriously alarmed the Ministry for Foreign Affairs in Berlin. He tried to maintain that the occupation of Kiao-chau was a violation of the Cassini Convention. His Majesty, however, declined to be moved by Count Muravieff's bluster which he knew was not authorized by the Emperor of Russia. He therefore gave the necessary instructions to Baron von Rotenhahn who was temporarily in charge of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and at the same time ascertained from the Chinese Government that the Cassini Convention which Count Muravieff had more than once invoked had no existence in fact.

I observed that what His Majesty had said accounted for the presence of Russian ships at Port Arthur. as Count Muravieff must have found it necessary to make some sort of demonstration. The Emperor replied in the affirmative and said that the Chinese Government had informed him that they had consented to the presence of the Russian ships and that no time had been fixed for their departure. It was therefore probable that they would remain there definitively in spite of the statements of the Russian Government that they would be withdrawn as soon as Vladivostock should be free of ice.

I have the honour, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES

(²) [V. also p. 42, No. 62, Lt.-Col. J. M. Grierson, January 19, 1898.]

II.—THE DIRECT BRITISH OVERTURE TO RUSSIA (JANUARY–MARCH 1898).

[*ED. NOTE.*—The Tsar's account of the British approach is contained in his letter of the 3rd June, 1898, to William II (printed in *G.P.* XIV, Pt. I, pp. 250–251). The following documents suggest doubt as to the statement there made by the Tsar: "Without thinking twice over it, their proposals were refused."

This letter is in reply to one of William II of the 30th May 1898 (*v. The Kaiser's Letters to the Tsar*. English translation 1920. Hodder and Stoughton, pp. 50–55) which describes Mr. Chamberlain's negotiation with Germany.]

No. 5.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

F.O. Russia 1557.

Foreign Office, January 17, 1898

Tel. (No. 7.) Secret.

D. 4.35 P.M.

If practicable ask Monsieur Witte whether it is possible that England and Russia should work together in China. Our objects are not antagonistic in any serious degree: on the other hand we can both of us do each other a great deal of harm if we try. It is better therefore we should come to an understanding. We would go far to further Russian commercial objects in the North, if we could regard her as willing to work with us.

No. 6.

*Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.**St. Petersburg, January 20, 1898.*

F.O. Russia 1559.

D. 3 P.M.

Tel. (No. 10.) Secret.

R. 9.40 P.M.

I spoke to Count Mouraviev yesterday in the sense of your Lordship's telegram No. 7 Secret of the 17th instant, and he responded more favourably even than I expected. He said he entirely shared your views on the subject and that he was sure his sovereign did so likewise, but he would without delay report my language to His Imperial Majesty. I laid stress on the favourable current to Russia now existing in England, and I said that I thought any understanding, to be really effective and lasting, ought to extend to the general area of our respective interests, and not to be confined to the important questions affecting the Far East. Count Mouraviev agreed in this and said he was ready to consider at once any proposal which would bring about a closer understanding (*entente*) between the two countries, and he begged me to telegraph this to your Lordship. He suggested that Her Majesty's Government should formulate their views. I was not sure whether your Lordship would care to do this, and, on my hinting that perhaps it would be better that he should do so, he replied that he saw no objection. All the same I doubt his taking the initiative, and for many reasons I think that it would be well if you sent me the general lines on which to work, and that we should try and bring the Russian Government up to them. He spoke in detail of Russian sphere of influence in China, which was practically all northern China from Tientsin to Peking, Peking to Manchuria. He said that new Minister of War ? [*sic*] General Kuropatkin was of opinion that an understanding with England was quite practicable, and on my referring to information I had received that the railway from Niero to Kushik was being [*sic*] pressed with great vigour, he said that if we came to an understanding this railway would be a trans-continental line to India, beneficial to both countries. He thought our conversation to-day most important, and a friendly exchange of general views was the best way to open the question, and as soon as I heard from your Lordship and he had spoken to the Emperor we could resume the conversation. I suggested that probably the question would progress better if the negotiations were conducted between your Lordship and M. de Staal, but he said it was important to him to be near the Winter Palace, and he would prefer to carry them on (? here). He was quite ready to put his cards on the table, if your Lordship would do the same. As I stood up to leave he referred to some remarks I had made to him the other day about the continued hostile language of the Russian Press towards us, and said that he would take steps to alter its tone. The information I have received since my return leads to the opinion that (? Russian Government) and particularly the Emperor are greatly afraid of complications arising before the Siberian railway is completed, and that in so far [as?] the moment is opportune for an amicable arrangement in regard to our respective interests in China and elsewhere. At the same time it becomes the more important to take care that any understanding we may come to gives no such headway that it cannot be set aside when it may seem to Russia to have served its temporary purpose.

No. 7.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.⁽¹⁾

F.O. Russia 1552.

(No. 24.)

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, D. January 20, 1898.

R. January 24, 1898.

In the course of conversation on Wednesday, Count Mouravieff said that Russia had intended later on to occupy Kiao-chau, where the Chinese had given them the "droit de premier mouillage," and he let me understand they were not at all pleased at being forestalled by Germany.

This is the first admission of the sort which Count Mouravieff has made, and it is important.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

⁽¹⁾ [Russian views are indicated in *G.P.* XIV. I. 75-84, 97-8. The Chinese view, expressed by Prince Ching and Li-Hung-Chang (*ib.* 61-2) was that Russia had no such claims.]

No. 8.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

St. Petersburg, January 23, 1898.

F.O. Russia 1559.

Tel. (No. 12.) Secret.

D. January 23, midnight.

R. January 24, 7.30 A.M.

I saw M. Witte last night.

He spoke more cautiously than usual owing probably to reported friction with Count Mouravieff and he requested me to regard what he said as strictly private and personal.

He showed great annoyance at German action which he characterized as an act of brigandage and moreover a *bêtise* for it necessarily indisposed this Government towards them. Nevertheless if he had been Minister for Foreign Affairs he would not have stirred nor taken Port Arthur—not even if France took Hainan or Japan Wei-hai-wei and England obtained her conditions for a loan. He thinks Russia's geographical position must sooner or later secure her political predominance in the North of China and her true policy is to keep China intact. But what he asked would England say if Russia's occupation of Port Arthur became permanent? The force of circumstances might make a temporary occupation of long duration.

He wanted to find out how far Her Majesty's Government would go with Russia, for he knew if we came to an understanding our rule would be law in the Far East. I declined to enter into details saying that the object of my visit to-day was to learn whether he still thought an understanding possible and if so if he would give it his support; but I said our natural and necessary policy was to keep China open to foreign trade, to oppose prohibitive tariffs and not to allow our commercial interests and our consequent political position to be set aside by the action of other Powers.

Briefly M. Witte's remarks amount to this. He is in favour of an alliance as he termed it, and he is ready to support what he calls England's practical and commercial policy provided that England will not impede Russian ambition in the North. He regards the Yangtze valley as England's proper sphere of influence, and between us we could hold Germany in check.

He does not think Japan will leave Wei-ha-wei. He is nervous in regard to an Anglo-Japanese alliance, the possibility of which I thought it advisable not to exclude from his political vision. He has not yet lost all hope of the Chinese refusing the conditions of the loan and turning again to Russia.

He again requested that his conversation would be treated as strictly private and secret, and he was glad I had spoken to Count Mouravieff in the first instance.

[NOTE.—The following despatch supplements the above :—

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1552.
(No. 38.) Confidential.
My Lord,

*St. Petersburg, D. January 30, 1898.
R. February 14, 1898.*

In reporting on the 23rd instant a conversation I had with M. Witte, respecting the state of affairs in China, I omitted to refer to one point which it may be well to put on record.

Producing from a carefully locked desk a map of China, the Minister proceeded to draw his hand over the Provinces of Chili, Shansi, Shensi, and Kansuh, and said that sooner or later Russia would probably absorb all this territory. Then putting his finger on Lanchow*, he said that the Siberian Railway would in time run a branch line to this town, and that he had already minute details of the distance, cost of construction, &c. He considered the lower part of China, embracing the lower and upper waters of the Yang-tsze, would be beyond the reach of Russian expansion, and no doubt would be the sphere of British preponderance.

I ought perhaps to add that the Minister premised the conversation by saying that his remarks were absolutely unofficial and personal.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.]

* In Kansuh, nearly on the 104th meridian.—J.A.C.

No. 9.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

F.O. Russia 1557.
Tel. (No. 22.) Secret.

*Foreign Office, January 25, 1898
D. 2 P.M.*

Our idea was this. The two Empires of China and Turkey are so weak that in all important matters they are constantly guided by the advice of Foreign Powers. In giving this advice Russia and England are constantly opposed, neutralizing each other's efforts much more frequently than the real antagonism of their interests would justify; and this condition of things is not likely to diminish, but to increase. It is to remove or lessen this evil that we have thought than an understanding with Russia might benefit both nations.

We contemplate no infraction of existing rights. We would not admit the violation of any existing treaties, or impair the integrity of the present empires of either China or Turkey. These two conditions are vital. We aim at no partition of territory, but only a partition of preponderance. It is evident that both in respect to Turkey and China there are large portions which interest Russia much more than England and *vice versa*. Merely as an illustration, and binding myself to nothing, I would say that the portion of Turkey which drains into the Black Sea, together with the drainage valley of the Euphrates as far as Bagdad, interest Russia much more than England: whereas Turkish Africa, Arabia, and the Valley of the Euphrates below Bagdad interest England much more than Russia. A similar distinction exists in China between the Valley of the Hoango with the territory north of it and the Valley of the Yangtze.

Would it be possible to arrange that where, in regard to these territories our counsels differ, the Power least interested should give way to and assist the other? I do not disguise from myself that the difficulty would be great. Is it insuperable? I have designedly omitted to deal with large tracts in each Empire, because neither Power has shown any keen interest in them.

No. 10.

*Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.**St. Petersburg, February 2, 1898.*

F.O. Russia 1559.

D. 9.55 A.M.

Tel. (No. 16.) Secret.

R. 10 P.M.

The Emperor's language to me last night at the court ball was very encouraging. H.I.M. said that he thought that an arrangement between the two countries such as I had mentioned to Count Muraviev most desirable and he believed the negotiations would succeed. I shall see Count Muraviev this afternoon. It seems desirable for many reasons to keep these negotiations as secret as possible.

No. 11.

*Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.**St. Petersburg, February 3, 1898.*

F.O. Russia 1559.

D. 12.20 A.M.

Tel. (No. 17.) Secret.

R. 7.45 A.M.

After repeating on the part of the Emperor the assurances recorded in my telegram No. 16 Secret Count Muraviev said he was instructed to tell me that, without prejudice to the general question, His Majesty thought that our respective Governments ought to proceed in the first instance to treat Chinese affairs which were very pressing. His Majesty would like to know your Lordship's views as to the precise way in which we should assist each other and how far this assistance would go.

I explained again to his Excellency your Lordship's ideas as set forth in first paragraph and beginning of second paragraph of your Lordship's telegram No. 22 of 25th January but he begged me to transmit Emperor's message all the same. Upon your Lordship replying the Russian Government would present their demands and so on until an arrangement is concluded. I referred to the Russian opposition to our proposed loan and tried to stop it in order to allow negotiations to begin without any angry question between us. Count Muraviev said that Chinese Minister informed him yesterday that these negotiations were broken off. He also asserted that he did not know the precise demands of Her Majesty's Government but that he regarded them generally as disadvantageous to Russia. He did not appear to have any very strong feeling about the loan; in any case he said nothing that would seem to exclude it from our first negotiations though I hardly think his Government will agree to open Talienwan.

Before I left his Excellency added that later on we would take up the question of our respective spheres of influence in Turkey and said something about the mutual advantages of dispensing with all uneasiness in regard to Russian designs upon India. He considered it highly desirable to treat these negotiations as secret and very confidential.

No. 12.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1552.

(No. 45.)

St. Petersburg, D. February 3, 1898.

My Lord,

R. February 8, 1898.

I have the honour to add a few remarks to the report of Count Mouravieff's conversation which I had the honour to make in my telegram No. 17 Secret, of yesterday.

After his Excellency had informed me of the Emperor's encouraging language, he was anxious to enter into details as to the exact sphere over which Her Majesty's Government would recognize Russian preponderance in the north of China, and referred to my mention of the River Hoang-Ho as the southern limit of their sphere. I said that I had mentioned this line in order to illustrate my meaning, just as I had mentioned Turkey in Asia, Africa, and Arabia, but that I did not conceive that it was the Emperor's idea or that of your Lordship to take an isolated sphere without reference to the entire scheme for improving and placing upon a friendly and durable basis the political relations between Russia and England.

Count Mouravieff repeated that he had mentioned the Chinese sphere without prejudice of the general idea, but merely as the more important and pressing question. [The rest deals with details of the proposed Franco-Russian Loan.]

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 13.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

St. Petersburg, February 7, 1898.

F.O. Russia 1559.

D. 7.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 25.) Secret.

R. 10 P.M.

During my conversation with Count Lamsdorff this morning reported in my preceding telegram⁽¹⁾ I laid great emphasis on the assurance given me by the Emperor that His Majesty entirely concurred in your Lordship's ideas; that I could count upon his assistance and that he was sure the negotiations for an understanding between Russia and Great Britain would succeed. Count Lamsdorff said that he was aware that the Emperor had used this language, and that the word of the Autocrat of Russia was more important and more reliable than any Parliament or Government.

In replying to my late telegrams I think it would be well to formally and officially acknowledge the Emperor's assurances and [sic] promises, and in such a manner that I can communicate the despatch in some form to the Russian Government.

Does your Lordship prefer to divide the Loan with Russia? The only advantage I can see is that it would make a concession in regard to Talienwan easier, but on the other hand its effect would be to reduce generally our claim to specially favourable conditions. I am unable to say whether the Russian Government would take half: it may be they would hesitate on account of France.

Assuming your Lordship wishes to take the whole Loan, and from the standpoint of St. Petersburg this seems to me preferable at present, do you authorize me to discuss the conditions with the Russian Government? The more we ask within reason at first, the more we are likely to get.

I have not yet, as from your Lordship [? sic], defined our sphere of influence. There is no doubt they will be satisfied with the regions north of the Hoang-Ho or even with Tientsin and Pechili coast, but I have observed that Count Muraviev has rather avoided referring to Asia Minor, Africa, Persian Gulf, &c.

Now is the time, I think, to make it clearly understood that the arrangement between the two countries shall extend not only to China but to all the other regions where we have conflicting interests.

There is a Court Ball to-morrow night and the Emperor and Empress are dining at Her Majesty's Embassy on Thursday, and as I may have an opportunity of some private conversation on either occasion, I hope to hear from your Lordship as soon as possible.

(¹) Not reproduced.

No. 14.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

F.O. Russia 1557.

Foreign Office, February 8, 1898.

Tel. (No. 36.) Secret.

D. 4.50 P.M.

Yours No. 25 of 7th February.

Li Hung Chang has informed us through the Chinese Minister that China has been compelled by the menaces of Russia to refuse the loan.

The Chinese Minister does not keep secrets: and therefore this announcement is practically public property. Just after this very hostile and insulting action it will be difficult for us to put on paper an effusive recognition of the Emperor's kindness. But as I am sure this affront is not due to any order of the Emperor you may, as from me, verbally thank the Emperor for the goodwill shown in his message in any terms you think suitable.

I agree with you that under existing circumstances there seems to be no advantage in dividing the loan. It is very desirable you should hear from Russian Government and discuss with them their statement of the conditions to which they object.

The difficulty about extending the arrangement to Persia is that the northern part of Persia which would be the natural sphere of Russian preponderance includes Tehran: and the Shah, who would be immediately informed, would think we had deserted him.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On the 9th February, 1898, Sir Claude MacDonald addressed a note to the Tsung-li-Yamen (Chinese Board of Foreign Affairs) asking for "a definite assurance that China will never alienate any territory in the provinces adjoining the Yang-tsze to any other Power, whether under lease, mortgage or any other designation." This assurance was given by the Chinese Government on the 11th February. The notes exchanged are printed in *B.F.S.P.*, XCVI, 572-3 (1906).]

No. 15.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir C. MacDonald.

F.O. China 1338.

Foreign Office, February 11, 1898.

Tel. (No. 34.) Secret.

D. 4.30 P.M.

We have had some interchange of friendly language at St. Petersburg, but they are insincere and their language is ambiguous. We have intimated a disinclination for a joint loan at present, and they seem to be of the same opinion. Let me know if you have come to any further agreement with China in the way of clenching what you have done.

No. 16.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1552.

(No. 54.) Secret.

St. Petersburg, D. February 12, 1898.

My Lord,

R. February 16, 1898.

I communicated to Count Lamsdorff yesterday, in the absence of Count Mouravieff, the conditions on which Her Majesty's Government agreed to make a loan to China, and Count Lamsdorff informed me of the conditions alleged by the Chinese Government to have been preferred. These conditions did not differ from those I had stated, except that they included certain mining and railway privileges in Pechili. . . .
[Details as to loan.]

He said that he could not discuss the conditions of the loan until he had taken the Emperor's orders, but that he would submit the matter to His Imperial Majesty without delay.

He thought that it would be advisable to put on record in an official and confidential note the views of Her Majesty's Government and the stage which the negotiations had already reached and I accordingly addressed to Count Mouravieff the note of which I have the honour to inclose a copy herewith.

After full consideration I thought it better to instance your Lordship's meaning by a territorial definition of spheres of political preponderance in order to avoid a request, which I was sure would be made, for more precise and definite views as to the respective spheres of influence of the two countries and the mode and manner in which it was proposed they should render assistance to each other.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

Enclosure in No. 16.

Sir N. O'Connor to Count Mouravieff.

F.O. Russia 1552.

(Confidential.)

M. le Ministre,

St. Petersburg, February 12. 1898.

With reference to the several conversations I have lately had with your Excellency on the subject of a good understanding between the Governments of Great Britain and Russia, and the encouragement given to these overtures by your Excellency and in the highest quarters, as well as to prevent the possibility of any misunderstanding, however unintentional, on either side it will, I feel sure, be agreeable to your Excellency that I should put on record the steps and the progress which have already marked these negotiations.

It will be within your Excellency's recollection that, on the 19th of last month, I had the honour to communicate, on behalf of Lord Salisbury, the reason for which Her Majesty's Government considered an understanding between the two Governments to be advisable and their ideas as to the lines upon which such an understanding should be based.

They were to the effect that the weakness of the two Empires of Turkey and China caused them to make constant appeals to Foreign Powers for advice, and that in giving that advice the Governments of Great Britain and Russia found themselves in constant opposition, with the result that the efforts of one or the other Powers were neutralised far more frequently than any divergence between their respective interests would appear to justify, a condition of affairs which, if left to itself, would seem likely to increase rather than diminish.

It was with the object of removing or lessening this danger that it occurred to Her Majesty's Government that an understanding between the two Governments might be of the greatest advantage to both nations by enabling them to work together harmoniously instead of devoting themselves to efforts which might, at all events, have the appearance of attempts to thwart their respective plans.

In communicating these views I explained, by Lord Salisbury's desire, that under the proposed arrangement no infraction of existing rights and Treaties, and no violation of the integrity of the Empires of either Turkey or China was contemplated by Her Majesty's Government, and that their idea was a partition of preponderating political influence and not a partition of territory.

I pointed out that it was evident that there were large portions of both the Chinese and Ottoman Empires in which Russia and Great Britain had respectively greater interests, the one than the other, and I stated that it was in this order of ideas that Lord Salisbury had thought that it might be possible to come to an arrangement by which, in regard to those territories where the counsels of the two Powers were divergent, the Power least interested should give way to and assist the other.

As an instance of the territories in which an arrangement such as that proposed by Lord Salisbury could possibly be put into effect, I mentioned that the portion of the Ottoman Empire which drains into the Black Sea or the sea as far as the beginning of the Ægean Sea, together with the drainage of the valley of the Euphrates as far as Bagdad interested Russia far more than Great Britain, whereas the interests of the latter were greater in Turkish Africa, Arabia, and the valley of the Euphrates below Bagdad.

I added that a similar distinction of interests existed in the Chinese Empire, where Russian interests were preponderant in the north and those of Great Britain in the region of the Yang-tsze.

Your Excellency was good enough to inform me, in reply to my communication, that you entirely concurred in the views of Her Majesty's Government, and that you would not fail to submit them to the Emperor.

On the 20th January [O.S.] the Emperor did me the honour of speaking to me on the subject, and His Imperial Majesty was pleased to state that he considered an arrangement between the two countries, such as had been suggested by Lord Salisbury, to be most desirable, that it would receive his support, and that he felt assured that the negotiations which had been commenced in that sense could be brought to a successful issue.

His Imperial Majesty's gracious language appeared to me so important a stage in the progress of the negotiations, that I felt it my duty to report it at once to the Marquess of Salisbury.

In reply, his Lordship informed me of the great satisfaction with which he had received an assurance which forms such a weighty guarantee for the successful conclusion of an understanding between the two countries.

While not losing sight of the main issue, a cordial and close understanding between the two countries based upon the relative importance of their respective interests, your Excellency intimated a wish that the negotiations should begin by the most pressing question, which certainly seemed to be connected with affairs in China. In compliance with this desire, and with the permission of the Marquess of Salisbury, I communicated to your Excellency yesterday confidentially, through Count Lamsdorff, the conditions upon which Her Majesty's Government proposed to guarantee a loan for the Chinese Government, and, in exchange, I learnt the statements made by the Tsung-li Yamên to M. Pavlof on this subject.

The negotiations would now appear to have arrived at a point permitting the discussion, to the mutual advantage of each country, of the more definite issues at stake, and it is in the hope of facilitating this aim that I have addressed to your Excellency the present communication.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 17.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1552.

(No. 58.) Secret.

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, D. February 16, 1898.

R. February 28, 1898.

I saw Count Lamsdorff yesterday afternoon upon his return from the Palace after presenting, in the absence of Count Mouravieff, his usual weekly report to the Emperor.

I asked His Excellency incidentally whether he had shown the Emperor the note of which a copy was enclosed to Your Lordship in my despatch No. 54, Secret, of the 12th instant, and if His Imperial Majesty had made any remarks upon it.

Count Lamsdorff replied that the Emperor had perused its contents in English and that He had told him to consult the Minister of Finance in regard to the conditions of the Anglo-Chinese Loan; Count Lamsdorff added that he hoped in a few days to be able to discuss this matter with me.

At a Court Ball the same evening His Majesty briefly referred to the same subject. He said that he had read my note and that now the negotiations respecting the question of a loan could be carried on with Count Lamsdorff until Count Mouravieff was able again to attend to business, which he hoped would be in about a fortnight.

Neither the Emperor nor Count Lamsdorff took any exception to the account given in my note of our negotiations up to the present moment. Count Lamsdorff on the contrary intimated that it contained an accurate statement of what he understood from Count Lamsdorff and the Emperor as well as from myself had taken place.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 18.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

St. Petersburg, February 19, 1898.

F.O. Russia 1559.

D. 4.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 32.) Secret.

R. 6.40 P.M.

With reference to my immediately preceding telegram Count Lamsdorff appeared reluctant to communicate Russian counter-demands, but finally stated that they were very simple, merely a lease for, say, twenty years of Talienwan and Port Arthur, or some other port in the North which may ultimately be considered more desirable as a terminal railway station. He argued specially that this lease would not destroy Chinese sovereignty and that all they wanted was an outlet for their commerce and some place where they could coal and dock their ships in safety; but, having said this, he clearly gave me to understand that they intended to hold to these ports at any cost. I let him see that I did not regard their demands in the same light, that I considered them on the contrary quite disproportionate and of a totally different nature to those preferred by Her Majesty's Government, and I pointed out that the possession of such a strong military position as Port Arthur would radically alter the condition of things. Under these circumstances I did not, I said, feel at liberty to discuss these demands without referring to your Lordship. I remarked that if we followed the order of ideas contained in the Russian demands we should necessarily have to seek some equivalent compensation within the British sphere, whereas our demands so far were for the most part essentially commercial. Without raising objection to this remark, Count Lamsdorff laid great stress on the sacrifices made by Russia in foregoing her prior claim to the loan with all its political importance, and upon my pointing out that our proposals offered very advantageous financial terms to China, he said: "But the fact remains that if England does not make it Russia will do so." The upshot of Count Lamsdorff's remarks is that with or without the consent of Her Majesty's Government Russia is determined to stick to Port Arthur and Talienwan, but that she is open to a deal. He said he would inform the Minister of Finance of my observations respecting the conditions of the loan and talk to me again on the subject before Tuesday. He asked that our negotiations should be regarded as strictly confidential, and he showed much nervousness lest the French should get wind of them before we came to any conclusion.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

St. Petersburg, February 22, 1898.

F.O. Russia 1559.

D. 5.15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 33.) Secret.

R. 10.35 P.M.

[Details as to Port Arthur and proposed British Loan.] . . . I venture to think that the question now resolves itself to the point of considering whether it is best not to oppose Russian demands and to go on with the negotiations for a good understanding; or to risk Russia getting what she wants without our acquiescence and to see the negotiations break down leaving inevitably behind them much sore feeling.

In the former case I propose that we should not pledge ourselves at all in a definite manner until we see how far Russia will go in regard to the broader question.

No. 20.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

St. Petersburg, February 22, 1898.

F.O. Russia 1559.

D. 5.5 P.M.

Tel. (No. 34.) Secret.

R. 11.15 P.M.

I have just received note from Russian Government acknowledging mine of 12th February. It says my communication has been laid before the Emperor who has been pleased to see in it the desire of Her Majesty's Government to avoid by means of an *entente* all misunderstandings in regions where the interests of the two countries are at issue.

The Emperor welcomes these overtures and thinks that the affairs of China and more especially the loan offer a good opportunity of putting them into immediate application which would ultimately lead to an exchange of views on the larger question.

The note acknowledges communication of our conditions and the Russian counter-demands and concludes by saying Russian Government now awaits further communications.

This official notification of the Emperor's approval marks already an important stage in the negotiations.

No. 21.

Sir Claude MacDonald to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Peking, March 1, 1898.

F.O. China 1340.

D. 2.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 59.)

R. 4 P.M.

Definite Agreement for Anglo-German Loan⁽¹⁾ signed this morning.

⁽¹⁾ [For some observations on this loan, which was primarily a bankers' affair, v. *G.P.*, XIV, I, 174-189.]

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1552.

(No. 71.) Secret.

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, D. March 3, 1898.

R. March 7, 1898.

Count Lamsdorff told me yesterday that the Emperor appeared on Tuesday to be much disappointed at the news of the conclusion of a Chinese Loan at the moment when the negotiations between the British and Russian Governments were progressing so auspiciously.

Without entering into the question as to whether there was connection between the political and commercial advantages lately obtained from China by Her Majesty's Government and the loan, there was no doubt, Count Lamsdorff said, that the two together had made an unfavourable impression upon the Emperor, as also upon the public, and I gathered that, under the feeling created by these events, His Majesty did not seem inclined to pursue, for the moment, at all events, the discussion of the broader question.

I do not think that our negotiations have actually broken down, but they have certainly had a severe check, and it may be difficult to put the Emperor into good humour again.

From some remarks dropped by Count Lamsdorff, it is evident that the Russian Government will eventually be very much guided in their policy in regard to the opening of Talienwan, under existing Treaty rights, by what the Germans do at Kiao-chau, and that, if the latter make a precedent, they will be tempted to follow suit.

The report that Russia is bent upon getting three or four men-of-war through the Straits continues to gain credence.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 23.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

St. Petersburg, March 13, 1898.

F.O. Russia 1559.

Tel. (No. 46.) Confidential.

D. 8.20 P.M.

R. 11.30 P.M.

It is evident that the official language and assurances of the Russian Government cover only a small part of their ultimate intentions, and while Her Majesty's Government has under consideration their policy towards China it will be well that I should briefly state what I believe their intentions to be. When they have obtained a lease of Talienwan and Port Arthur under the promise of opening one or both ports to foreign trade they will proceed to refortify Port Arthur and to erect fortifications in one of the three harbours of Talienwan. Whether the railway will terminate here or at Yangchow which is I believe nearer than Port Arthur to the mouth of the Peiho is doubtful but there is no doubt that the Russian Government think that before the expiration of their lease of the two ports Manchuria will be in their possession and Pechili if not actually in their possession virtually at their mercy.

Before this stage is reached and if the effete government of Peking is not, as seems probable, upset by a revolution in the country which will precipitate Russian action, I believe Russian influence in Peking will be so great as to enable them to nullify the assurance given to Her Majesty's Government by the Chinese Government respecting the Inspectorate-General. There is the policy of stopping Russian designs by a combination of Powers; but I confess I do not know the Powers that will take action

with us for this purpose. There is the alternative policy of accepting Russian assurances for as much as they are worth and proceeding to safeguard British interests and prestige by insisting upon a cession of a port in Chusan and perhaps Silver Island in the Yangtze to redress the balance of power, also upon the right to connect Burmah Railway with China or Anglo-China Railways.

I know this is tantamount at the very least to accepting spheres of influence for which Her Majesty's Government had shown no proclivity, but it secures a share and a preponderant share in the semi-disintegration of China which has already unfortunately commenced. Russian policy is to obtain from China all they want by so-called friendly negotiation, but the moment they have obtained this object they will take China more or less under their protection and oppose so strongly our compensatory demands that we may well be brought to the verge of war while it is certain that we shall not be able to get what we want except by force and in direct opposition to China. Russian Government will on the other hand be able speciously to argue that they acted throughout in agreement with Chinese Government. If these considerations have any worth they point to the fact that if Her Majesty's Government decide upon making serious counter-demands upon China they will be better made before the Russian demands have been accepted than at a later period. But I hope I shall not be considered to have gone outside my province in venturing to lay them before your Lordship.

No. 24.

Memorandum by Mr. Bertie.

F.O. China 1357.

Foreign Office, March 14, 1898.

The Emperor of Russia has performed an "acquit de conscience" towards his English relatives by showing goodwill to the theoretical idea of a general understanding with England; but circumstances and Russian feeling and ambition are too strong for him to run counter to his Ministers' designs.

The concessions which we have obtained cannot reasonably be considered as anti-Russian.

The preponderance over all other European trade of ours fully entitles us to a continuance of the Inspectorate-General of Customs in English hands.

The opening of a port in Hunan and access of steamers to Chinese waterways is a benefit to the world, and Russia can only feel aggrieved on the ground that she desires to keep the north of China more or less difficult of access by sea and rivers in order to pour over the land frontier Russian goods at preferential rates.

If we desire to have some counterpoise to the preponderance of Russian and German influences at Peking we must have some point of advantage in the north. Port Hamilton is part of Corea, and its occupation by us would have no influence now on the Chinese Government. At Wei-hai Wei we should face Russia, and have some control over the proceedings of the Germans, who are evidently bent on monopolising everything in Shantung, and by preventing a trunk line of railway from Tien-tsin to Chin-kiang, on the Yang-tsze River, hope to draw the trade of Pechili, Shansi, and Shensi to the triangle of railways in Shantung and to Kiao-chau. That triangle will be hereafter connected with Tien-tsin by a further concession, but it will not be prolonged south of Shantung.

As to Chusan and Silver Island, which Sir N. O'Connor recommends us to occupy, we can take them whenever some other Power moves that way, or turn out such Power if found in occupation; but the occupation of Wei-hai Wei requires a preliminary arrangement either with China and Japan, or with the latter Power only.

If the indemnity due to Japan be paid by China in May, and Japan remain at Wei-hai Wei, she may probably be summoned by Russia, France, and Germany to

turn out. Germany will then step in by arrangement with Russia and France, who will get or take what they desire, and we shall be left to content ourselves as best we can in the Yang-tsze region, seeing our trade gradually squeezed out of North and South China.

If we are not to take Wei-hai Wei the next best thing would be that Japan should remain there, and to strengthen her purpose it would be necessary to promise to back her up in refusing to leave if called upon to do so by Russia, Germany, and France.

If, on the other hand, we desire to have Wei-hai Wei, we ought to come to an understanding at once with Japan, so as to get the forts intact when she evacuates the place. Otherwise she will destroy what still remains, as she did at Port Arthur when she withdrew from there.

F. B.

III.—THE RUSSIAN LEASE OF PORT ARTHUR AND THE BRITISH LEASE OF WEI-HAI WEI (FEBRUARY– APRIL 1898).

No. 25.

Sir C. MacDonald to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Peking, February 25, 1898.

F.O. China 1340.

D. 4.10 P.M.

Tel. Separate and Secret.

R. 1 P.M.

Sir Robert Hart tells me that if the Chinese Government thought their request would meet with a favourable response they would offer lease of Wei-hai-Wei to British Government.

Above is very secret.

No. 26.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir C. MacDonald.

F.O. China 1338.

Foreign Office, February 25, 1898.

Tel. Separate and Secret.

D. 10 P.M.

Your telegram Secret of 25th.

The present policy of Her Majesty's Government is to discourage alienation of Chinese territory. It is therefore premature to discuss the lease of Wei-hai-wei unless the action of other Powers materially alters the position.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On the 6th March the German Minister in Peking, Herr von Heyking, reported that Russia had demanded possession of Port Arthur and Talienwan and other concessions from China, and that England had designs on Wei-hai Wei which the Japanese were ready to leave. *G.P.*, XIV, I, 155.]

No. 27.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1552.

(No. 93.)

St. Petersburg, D. March 13, 1898.

My Lord,

R. March 18, 1898.

As I had fair reason to suppose, after the conversation recorded in my despatch No. 92, Confidential, of this day's date, that Count Mouravieff would give me the assurance that Port Arthur, equally with Talienwan, would, in the event of a lease of these ports to Russia, be open to foreign commerce, I called upon his Excellency this afternoon.

I told him that the Leader of the Opposition in the House of Commons had given notification of a question on Monday in respect to affairs in the Far East, and that I would be glad to be in a position to inform your Lordship, before the debate came on, of any further assurance his Excellency was willing to give me in regard to this matter.

I pointed out that the assurance given by M. de Staal on behalf of his Government and frequently repeated to me either by himself or Count Lamsdorff, was positive as to the fact, namely, that any port ("tout port") leased by China to Russia would be open to foreign trade.

His Excellency said that this applied only to Talienwan, and that he was sure I would admit that he had never given me any assurances that Port Arthur would also be open to trade. I said I would not deny this, but that I begged to remind him that when the question was first mentioned the Russian Government only alluded to a lease of a port as an outlet for Russian commerce.

Count Mouravieff then sent for M. de Staal's Report of his conversation with your Lordship, which contained a copy of his note to you, in which he took exception to your Lordship's statement in the House of Lords that he had given a "written assurance," and had said that it would be a "free" port. He read me the despatch, a copy of which was already in my possession through the courtesy of your Lordship, and he found that it coincided with my statement, and that the expression used was clearly "tout port."

His Excellency seemed disturbed by this discovery, but after a few minutes' reflection, and pointing across the square to the Winter Palace, he said that he had received the Emperor's orders to tell me that Talienwan would be open to foreign trade, but that His Imperial Majesty had told him, at the same time, that Port Arthur would be regarded strictly as a military port. He could not, therefore, take upon himself to promise that both Port Arthur and Talienwan would be open, but that he would be able to give me a definite answer on Wednesday. In the meantime I could report to your Lordship that the question was under discussion here.

Referring to his remark that he had never given me any assurance in respect to the opening of Port Arthur, I reminded his Excellency that the mention of this port as comprised in the Russian demands was of comparatively recent date, and that, as I pointed out at the time, it altered in a most important degree the whole situation of affairs.

Count Mouravieff then went on to say that the Russian Government did not in any way ("d'aucune manière") desire to abrogate the sovereignty of the Chinese Government over these ports, but that they only required a lease of them for twenty-five years, for which they would pay an annual rent. The Russian Government considered that China owed them this for the services they had rendered her in her war with Japan, and these services must be properly requited. He spoke of the uncertainty still existing as to the spots where the Manchurian Railway would terminate, and seemed to indicate that it was by no means settled that Talienwan would be the terminal station.

I did not enter into any discussion as to the policy of Her Majesty's Government in face of recent developments in the Far East, but confined myself, as far as possible.

to finding out whether he was able to give me an assurance to-day that both Port Arthur and Talienwan, in the event of their being leased to Russia, would be open to British and foreign commerce.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 28.

Mr. A. J. Balfour⁽¹⁾ to Sir E. Satow.

F.O. Japan 501.

Tel. (No. 9.) Secret.

Foreign Office, March 15, 1898.

Chinese Government have conveyed to us their willingness that we should lease Wei-hai Wei after Japanese leave it.

It is desirable that we should know at once whether this would be agreeable to Japanese Government should Her Majesty's Government think it on general grounds advantageous.

(Private.)

We are informed that if we abstain Germany is very likely to step in.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [The Marquess of Salisbury had left at this time for the South of France, placing Mr. Balfour in charge of the Foreign Office.]

⁽²⁾ [Evidence to the same effect is given on the authority of the Marquis Ito by Sir E. Satow, F.O. Japan 502, No. 17 of the 23rd March, 1898. and in a private letter to Lord Salisbury of the same date; and in Tel. No. 77 of Sir C. MacDonald to Lord Salisbury, D. 14th March, 1898, R. 14th March.]

No. 29.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1553.

(No. 97.)

St. Petersburg, D. March 15, 1898.

My Lord,

R. March 18, 1898.

I have the honour to transmit herewith a précis drawn up by Mr. Carnegie of an article in the "Novoe Vremya" upon the present situation in the Far East.⁽¹⁾

The article remarks upon the discrepancy between the alarmed tone of the British Daily Press and the reserved utterances of members of Her Majesty's Government, and it draws the conclusion that the latter have fully realised the isolated position of Great Britain and the impossibility for her to obtain the support of any of the other Powers interested in the Far East in the event of a conflict with Russia.

The article emphasises this isolation by pointing out that the Anglo-German Loan may be still replaced by one effected by other Powers in which Germany could have no reason for not taking a share, so that Her Majesty's Government need not look to German support on that account, while the old friendship between Russia and America precludes the idea of any assistance being given to Great Britain by the Government of the United States.

A précis of an article from the "Novosti" is also enclosed,⁽¹⁾ which maintains the view that the foreign press is trying to sow discord between England and Russia, but that, in reality, there is nothing in the situation in the Far East to cause alarm.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

⁽¹⁾ Not reproduced.

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

March 17, 1898.

F.O. Japan 502.

D. 6 P.M.

Tel. (No. 15.) Secret.

R. 4.45 P.M.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 9.

The following answer has been given me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs :—

“The Chinese Government had asked Japanese Government if the latter on receiving the balance of the indemnity would evacuate Wei-hai Wei, and the latter had replied that it would faithfully carry out the Treaty of Shimonoseki.

“It had been the desire of the Japanese that China should be able to hold that place, but from the moment that she is unable to do so, Japan has no objection to its possession by a Power disposed to assist in maintaining the independence of China.

“The Japanese Government is anxious that this exchange of views should be regarded as confidential.”

No. 31.

Sir C. MacDonald to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. China 1334.

(No. 47.)

Peking, D. March 18, 1898.

My Lord,

R. May 1, 1898.

. . . . The idea of an alliance between Great Britain, Japan, and China, with regard to which I was privately sounded by the Privy Council, seems to have originated with the Hankow Viceroy, Chang Chih-tung. It has met with much favour, the fact that China contributes nothing to the strength of the alliance being left out of account.

. . . .

I have, &c.

CLAUDE M. MACDONALD.

No. 32.

Mr. A. J. Balfour to Sir C. MacDonald.

F.O. China 1338.

Foreign Office, March 19, 1898.

Tel. “A.”

D. 1.30 A.M.

The following telegram has been sent to St. Petersburg (repeats private telegram of 18th March to Sir N. O'Connor) :—

It seems probable that we may have to choose between two policies, the one allowing Russia to lease Port Arthur subject to engagements to preserve existing treaty rights and possibly though this is doubtful to refrain from fortifying Port Arthur—we taking as a makeweight a lease of Wei-hai Wei.

The other requiring the Russians to abstain from leasing Port Arthur—we engaging to take no port in Gulf of Pechili and not to intervene in Manchuria. In favour of first it may be urged that it could probably be concluded without endangering peace; that although in appearance weaker than second it would have no prejudicial effect on future of Northern China since with or without Port Arthur

this must inevitably fall to Russia and with or without Port Arthur we can maintain our naval superiority in Far East and even in Gulf of Pechili. In favour of second policy it may be said that though it can only be carried through at the risk of general war it is the only possible way of checking Russian advance and preventing the imminent partition of the Chinese Empire: that Wei-hai Wei if obtained would require too large a military force for its defence, and except for appearances would be worth little to us if fortified and still less if unfortified, and therefore would be no counterpoise to Port Arthur which is so strong by nature, and still possesses forts of such strength that it can easily be made impregnable while no pledge of the Russians with regard to its defences would be of any value; that the influence at Peking of the Power which had such a base at Port Arthur must be overwhelming. And finally that its possession would not only alter the balance of power at Peking but discredit England throughout the Far East.

If your local knowledge supplies you with any comments on these views I should be glad to have them.

[NOTE.—Port Arthur was actually occupied by Russian forces on the 16th March, 1898.]

No. 33.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, March 20, 1898.

F.O. France 3400.

D. 1.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 38.) Confidential.

R. 3.30 P.M.

French in China

M. Hanotaux says he believes that French policy in China approximates very closely to that of Her Majesty's Government. It is based on Conservative principles and the maintenance as long as possible of the integrity of the Chinese Empire. M. Hanotaux thinks "the attacks" on China both of Germany and Russia are premature and consequently regrettable. He hopes that France and England will encourage no policy of further dismemberment rivalry [*sic*] in which will not only create a situation of serious danger in China itself but very probably a war between European Powers.

He dislikes the principles of spheres of influence in China, but says that France must sustain her claims to consideration in the provinces contiguous to Tongking.

Railway privileges should be equally balanced and the participation of the French in the occupation of the administrative ports not absolutely ignored.

I pressed him about Hainan and coal dépôt on Lei-chow peninsula or elsewhere. He would only admit that these points fall within the purview of French claims if compensation is considered necessary.

No. 34.

Minute by the Marquess of Salisbury.

(Private.)⁽¹⁾

March 22, 1898.

"I still think that the best course on the whole to pursue as to Wei-hai-wei is to make a Chusan agreement, either binding China singly not to alienate or binding her to give us the first refusal.

"2. I entirely agree with MacDonald as to the effect of Russia occupying Port Arthur on Chinese Councils. It is insignificant compared to the effect of the long

⁽¹⁾ From the Sanderson MSS.

land frontier behind which no doubt in due time a Russian Corps d'armée will be quartered. A violent revolution would therefore be unwise, and might clash awkwardly with our French policy. The only thing to be done is to object to the military occupation of Port Arthur in language sufficiently measured to allow Russia to find a way out.

S.

No. 35.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1560.

Tel. (No. 55.) P.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, March 22, 1898.

With reference to Sir C. MacDonald's telegram No. 89 and my telegram No. 49 of the 15th instant, I have the honour to report that I saw Hssu, the Chinese Special Ambassador, yesterday. His Excellency told me that he had been informed by Count Mouravieff that assurances had been given by him to Her Majesty's Government to the effect that Russia would respect all Treaties existing between China and foreign countries, and that, in the event of a lease being obtained of Talienwan and Port Arthur, these ports would be open to commerce.

I confirmed this, but went on to say that the policy of the dismemberment of the Chinese Empire met with strong opposition from Her Majesty's Government.

(¹) Paraphrase : original not traced.

No. 36.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

F.O. Russia 1557.

Tel. (No. 90.)

Foreign Office, March 22, 1898.

D. 5.30 P.M.

Please inform Count Mouraviev that Her Majesty's Government note with satisfaction the assurances given to you to the effect that Russian Government have "no intention to infringe rights and privileges guaranteed by existing treaties between China and foreign countries" and that they do not propose in any way to interfere with Chinese Sovereignty.

On their part Her Majesty's Government would not regard with any dissatisfaction the lease by Russia of an ice free commercial harbour and its connection by rail with the Siberian Railway now under construction.

The control by Russia of a military port in the immediate neighbourhood of Peking opens questions of an entirely different order. The occupation of Port Arthur which is useless for commercial purposes and whose whole importance is derived solely from its military strength and strategic position, would inevitably be considered in the East as a standing menace to Peking and a commencement of the Partition of China. The same objection would apply with almost equal force to the military occupation or fortification of any other harbour on the same coast or in the Gulf of Pechili. Her Majesty's Government gather from some observations made by Count Lamsdorf and reported by you in your Despatch No. 81 that this is not a policy favoured by Russia, while it is one to which Her Majesty's Government entertain grave objections. On the other hand Her Majesty's Government are prepared to give assurances that beyond the maintenance of existing Treaty Rights they have no interests in Manchuria, and to pledge themselves to occupy no port in the Gulf of Pechili so long as the same policy is pursued by other Powers.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Salisbury.

St. Petersburg, March 23, 1898.

F.O. Russia 1559.

D. midnight.

Tel. (No. 57.)

R. March 24, 8 A.M.

I communicated verbally to Count Mouravieff to-day the substance of your Lordship's telegram No. 90, urging as strongly as I could the relinquishment of Russian demands as regards Port Arthur, but I cannot say I had any success. His Excellency repeated that Russia desired to respect the integrity of China, but he absolutely refused to admit that the proposed lease of Port Arthur violated this principle or constituted a dismemberment of the Chinese Empire. Anyhow he held that its occupation was a vital necessity for Russia; that what had been allowed to Germany and to Japan could not be denied to Russia; and that Her Majesty's Government was the only one to object. I could not move him from his ground, but as some of my arguments seemed to take effect I would like to see him again and also if possible to hear what M. Witte says. For the moment the matter stands thus: He will not give way about Port Arthur but he will give me a written assurance that Russian Government will respect rights and privileges guaranteed by existing Treaties between China and Foreign Powers, that they do not propose in any way to interfere with Chinese sovereignty, and that Port Arthur and Talienwan will be opened to commerce and ships of war. I might possibly also exact an assurance that Port Arthur will not be fortified. Besides this there might be a subsidiary understanding in regard to certain British requirements, but this was delicate ground to touch and I avoided it.

No. 38.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.⁽¹⁾

F.O. Russia 1551.

(No. 75.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 24, 1898.

The Russian Ambassador called upon Mr. Balfour this afternoon, and asked how things stood between Russia and England in the Far East.

Mr. Balfour said that the news he had received appeared to him of the most unsatisfactory character. We had always looked with favour upon the idea of Russia obtaining an ice-free port on the Pacific, and he himself had given expression to this view two years ago in a public speech. But the Russian Government had now given a most unfortunate extension to this policy.

If they succeeded in carrying out their proposal of occupying Port Arthur, which was wholly useless as a commercial port, and had no significance or importance except as a military stronghold, they would in effect be commencing the dismemberment of China and inviting the other Powers to follow their example. The possession of Port Arthur was not desired by us; but on the other hand, its occupation by another nation would have an effect upon the balance of power at Peking, which Her Majesty's Government could not but regard with grave objection.

Mr. Balfour added that it was much to be regretted that a policy which, so far as he could judge, would not further the aims or interests of Russia, should in any way menace the friendship of the two countries.

⁽¹⁾ [On this same day the 24th March Count Hatzfeldt reported from London to Berlin that Alfred Rothschild had arranged a meeting for him with Mr. Chamberlain and Mr. Balfour. This was the beginning of an important attempt at a *rapprochement* between England and Germany *v. G.P.*, XIV, I, 193 sqq.]

M. de Staal replied that he had no instructions from St. Petersburg upon the subject, but he believed that his Government considered that there should be a fortified terminus to their railway. Talienwan was unsuited for this purpose, and from the relative position of the two places, the possessor of Port Arthur could render Talienwan untenable for an enemy.

His Excellency incidentally admitted that but for the action of Germany, Russia would not, at all events for the present, have made the demands upon China, out of which the existing difficulty has arisen.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 39.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir C. MacDonald.

F.O. China 1338.

Foreign Office, March 25, 1898.

Tel. (No. 109.)

D. 9.20 P.M.

Surrender by Yâmen of Port Arthur to Russia alters materially balance of power in Gulf of Pechili. It is therefore necessary to obtain in the manner you think most efficacious and speedy the refusal of Wei-hai-Wei when Japanese have left it. The terms should be similar to those granted to Russia for Port Arthur.

British Fleet is on its way to Gulf of Pechili from Hong Kong.

No. 40.

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Japan 496.

(No. 40.) Very Confidential.

Tokyo, D. March 26, 1898.

My Lord,

R. May 6, 1898.

With reference to my telegram No. 18 of yesterday's date, I think it may be desirable that I should try to explain the situation somewhat in greater detail.

Since the intervention of the three Powers in 1895, which resulted in the retrocession of the Liaotung Peninsula, Japan seems to have taken up an attitude of present resignation to the inevitable, accompanied by strenuous efforts to place her military and naval establishments on such a footing as to enable her in the future to resist any attempt at intervention of the same kind. It was Russia that Japan feared most of the three Powers and her resolve to avoid a collision extended also to her position in Corea, a disposition that the unfortunate murder of the Queen, in which Japanese officials were implicated, strengthened still further.

The gradual acquisition by Russia of a preponderating influence in the peninsula, especially after the flight of the King to the Russian Legation, led to the negotiations carried on almost simultaneously at Moscow and Seoul, the ostensible effect of which was to place the two Powers in a position of equality.

This balance of power was, however, disturbed by the engagement of a large number of Russian military instructors, and finally, by the Convention of November last, which put the finances of the country under Russian control.

As your Lordship is aware, the Japanese Government remonstrated against the engagement of military instructors; but they were told that the promise to lend these officers was prior to the Convention of Moscow, and that they could not be withdrawn.

It would appear that Japan silently acquiesced in this answer, nor did she, as far as I have learnt, oppose the engagement of M. Alexeieff otherwise than by endeavouring to put pressure on the Corean Government through the Japanese Minister at Seoul.

The Japanese Government trusted to time to produce a spontaneous revulsion of Corean feeling against the too active interference of the Russian Chargé d'Affaires in the affairs of the kingdom, and this expectation has recently been realised, with the result that the Russian Government have withdrawn the military instructors and the financial adviser.

Whatever the ostensible reason for going to war with China may have been, there can be little doubt that the main object was to anticipate the completion of the Siberian Railway and to prevent Russia gaining free access to the Pacific Ocean.

The Treaty of Shimonoseki accordingly gave to Japan the Liaotung Peninsula, including Port Arthur and Talienwan Bay, with the whole coast of the Gulf of Pechili from the Corean boundary to the Treaty Port of Newchwang.

By this stipulation the object aimed at was held to have been attained.

Then followed the intervention of the three Powers, on the ground that the permanent occupation of the Liaotung Peninsula by Japan would be detrimental to the peace of the Far East, and the submission of Japan.

Russia now asks from China, under the form of a lease of Port Arthur and Talienwan Bay, coupled with permission to construct a branch from the Siberian Railway to these ports a grant of the very territory from which she summarily ejected Japan, on the ground that her possession would be a standing menace to the independence of the Peking Government.

In spite of the feeling which this news has aroused in Japan, as evinced by numerous and repeated articles in the press and the conversation of Japanese outside the Cabinet, it seems that the Japanese Government have remained passive, just as they were silent when the occupation of Kiao-chau by Germany was announced, and as they simply "took note" of the Russian Government's communication last December that they had obtained the permission of China to use Port Arthur as a temporary anchorage for their squadron.

If Marquis Ito has addressed any observations to the Russian Government on the phase that this temporary occupation has now assumed, he certainly has not taken the outside world into his confidence: and the answer given by him by Baron Nishi and by Mr. Komura, to my questions, has been that no communications have passed between the two Governments. I think it, however, very possible that in informing the Japanese Minister of St. Petersburg of the intention to withdraw M. Alexeieff and the military instructors, some intimation may have been given that, in return for the restoration of equality of influence in Corea, Japan would be expected to acquiesce in the recent demands on China in respect of Manchuria.

I do not think that, under the circumstances, Japan would openly oppose the action of Russia on her own account; and though she doubtless would be pleased to see Great Britain place a check on Russian progress, the Government would be unwilling to associate themselves with the action of Her Majesty's Government directed to this end. The exclusion of Russia from Port Arthur, while that Power was at liberty to lease Talienwan Bay and to bring a branch of the Siberian Railway to that place, would seem to them a result of comparative unimportance, especially as they have been informed that what Russia is aiming at is a naval base: and they moreover hold that the construction of the railway will eventually be followed by the acquisition of Manchuria.

I understand that your Lordship thinks it possible that Japan may have obtained some undertaking from Russia that Port Arthur should not be used as a naval base in return for allowing her to occupy Wei-hai Wei: and the question put to me in your Lordship's telegram No. 18 of March 23rd was, whether, if the Japanese Government were made acquainted with the policy of Her Majesty's Government, they could be prevented from committing themselves to such an engagement.

In spite of the inquiries which I have made, I cannot detect any indications of such an understanding being contemplated; and it seems to me unlikely that the Japanese would regard the presence of Russia at Wei-hai Wei as in any way compensated by Port Arthur remaining unfortified.

They would rather see it in the possession of any other Power, even of Germany; but if China cannot maintain hold of it, they would prefer to see it occupied by Great Britain. An undertaking such as that offered in your Lordship's telegram No. 90 to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg would not seem to them to go far enough, because they would think that Talienwan Bay could be hereafter fortified, in spite of present promises.

The Japanese Government, and especially the present Minister-President, are anxious to avoid any kind of foreign complication.

They have the appearance of being thoroughly disheartened, and they do not seem to appreciate the value of diplomacy, except as a preliminary to the use of force.

I have, &c.

ERNEST SATOW.

No. 41.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir N. O'Connor.

F.O. Russia 1551.

(No. 76 A.)

Sir.

Foreign Office, March 28, 1898.

From your Excellency's telegrams just received, and from those which have reached Her Majesty's Government from Peking, it appears that the Russian Government have requested or required from that of China three concessions in Manchuria and the Liaotong Peninsula. They have demanded a lease of Talienwan, a lease of Port Arthur, and the right to construct under specified conditions a railway connecting these two ports with the general railway system of Siberia.

It is evident that these concessions, whether temporary in form or not, will permanently and profoundly affect the future condition of Manchuria. For good or for evil, the social, political, and economic state of this region must inevitably be revolutionised when it is traversed by a railway under Russian management, connecting ports on the Pacific under Russian control with the commercial and military system of the Russian Empire. It becomes necessary, therefore, to examine how these changes are likely to affect British interests, and what attitude Her Majesty's Government should adopt with regard to them. The interests of this country in China are not, indeed, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, different in kind from those of other countries, but they are greater in extent, and have a greater relative importance, in proportion as the volume of British trade exceeds that in the hands of other nationals.

Speaking generally, it may be said that the policy of this country is effectively to open China to the commerce of the world, and that our estimate of the action of other Powers in the Far East depends on the degree to which it promotes or hinders the attainment of this object.

It follows from this that the occupation of territory by foreign Powers is to be judged by the results, direct and indirect, immediate and remote, which it is likely to have upon the commercial interests of the world, and the right of all nations to trade within the limits of the Chinese Empire upon equal terms.

The construction of railways, so long as the natural flow of trade along them is not obstructed or diverted by fiscal or administrative regulations, must always be one of the most powerful means by which the ends desired by Her Majesty's Government may be attained. It is with no dissatisfaction therefore that they view the scheme of

railway extension which is to traverse Manchuria from north to south, and ultimately to connect Talienwan with the general system of Russian railways. An ice-free port in the Far East has always seemed to Her Majesty's Government to be a legitimate object of Russian ambition, and they have no objection to offer to its acquisition.

Her Majesty's Government have further noted with satisfaction that the conditions to which the opening of new railways and ports in China should, in their opinion, be subject, viz., the continuance of the rights and privileges secured to foreign nations by existing Treaties, have been guaranteed by the explicit declarations of the Russian Government, which have been conveyed through you to Her Majesty's Government, in your telegram of the 16th March and despatch of that date. These declarations are to the effect that Port Arthur, as well as Talienwan, shall be open to foreign trade like other Chinese ports; that Russia has no intention of impairing the sovereignty of China; and that she will respect all the rights and privileges secured by existing Treaties between China and other foreign Powers;—a pledge which not only includes equality of commercial treatment, but also the right of foreign ships of war to visit ports which, though leased to Russia, are still to remain integral portions of the Chinese Empire.

The commercial side, therefore, of the Russian policy in Manchuria considered in the light of the engagements entered into by the Russian Government, is in accord with the general views of Her Majesty's Government. Unfortunately, this cannot be said of the policy considered as a whole. The Russian Government have exacted from the Yamên not merely railway concessions through Manchuria and the lease of a commercial harbour at Talienwan; they have required also that the control of Port Arthur should be ceded to them for a like term of years under similar conditions. Now, Port Arthur is not a commercial harbour. It is doubtful whether it could be converted into one. It is certain that, even if such a project were possible, it could never be worth while for the owners or lessees of Talienwan to embark upon it. But though not a commercial harbour, Port Arthur supplies a naval base, limited indeed in extent, but possessing great natural and artificial strength. And this, taken in connection with its strategic position, gives it an importance in the Gulf of Pechili and therefore at Peking, upon which, in their representations to Japan at the close of the war with China, the Russian Government laid the greatest emphasis.

It is from this last point of view that the occupation of Port Arthur chiefly concerns Her Majesty's Government. It is not because a position which can easily be made a naval arsenal of great strength has been acquired by Russia that they regret its occupation by that Power. It is because the possession, even if temporary, of this particular position, is likely to have political consequences at Peking of great international importance, and because the acquisition of a Chinese harbour notoriously useless for commercial purposes by a foreign Power will be universally interpreted in the Far East as indicating that the partition of China has begun.

As regards the second of these reasons nothing further need be said, inasmuch as Her Majesty's Government understand from Count Mouravieff's communication to you that this result is as little desired by the Russian Government as it is by that of Her Majesty. As regards the first, it may perhaps be proper to observe that a great military Power which is coterminous for over 4,000 miles with the land frontier of China, including the portion lying nearest to its capital, is never likely to be without its due share of influence on the councils of that country. Her Majesty's Government regard it as most unfortunate that it has been thought necessary in addition to obtain control of a port which, if the rest of the Gulf of Pechili remains in hands so helpless as those of the Sovereign Power, will command the maritime approaches to its capital, and give to Russia the same strategic advantage by sea which she already possesses in so ample a measure by land.

Her Majesty's Government have thought it their duty thus to put on record their grave objections to the occupation of Port Arthur by Russia. They regret that the proposals contained in my telegram of the 22nd instant were not acceptable to the Cabinet of St. Petersburg: but as these were rejected, they must retain their entire

liberty of action to take what steps they think best to protect their own interests and to diminish the evil consequences which they anticipate.

Your Excellency will read this despatch to the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and give him a copy of it.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

No. 42.

Sir C. MacDonald to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Pekin, March 28, 1898.

F.O. China 1340.

D. 8.10 A.M.

Tel. (No. 107.)

R. March 29, 5 P.M.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 109.

At an interview lasting three hours I pressed request for lease of Wei Hai Wei. Yâmen greatly fear counter-demands of other Powers. They also state lease of Wei Hai Wei leaves them without a suitable harbour for their ships recently launched in England and Germany.

Would it be possible to meet latter objection by any agreement for the use of the place by Chinese men-of-war? Yamên showed, what is now prevailing feeling here, great desire for England's friendship and support against Russia, and if we could hold out any encouragement it would prevent the change of feeling which will be produced if we have to gain our end by force.

I am to see them again in four days' time when I have requested final answer.

No. 43.

Sir C. MacDonald to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Peking, March 31, 1898.

F.O. China 1340.

D. 7.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 111.)

R. 6.20 P.M.

I saw Yâmen to-day and gave them till Saturday for final answer, telling them that if not affirmative matter would be placed in Admiral's hands. I believe that if I could have a few days' more time I could obtain lease but that they will not grant it so quickly.

No. 44.

Sir C. MacDonald to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Peking, April 3, 1898.

F.O. China 1340.

D. 8.30 A.M.

Tel. (No. 113.)

R. noon.

At interview yesterday Yâmen agreed to following:—

China leases Wei-hai Wei to Great Britain on the same terms as Port Arthur has been leased to Russia, but Great Britain agrees not to take possession of the place until it has been given up by Japan. The lease will continue until Russia ceases to occupy Liaotung. Details are left for subsequent arrangement. Whilst agreeing to

the above they begged me to place before Her Majesty's Government for their sympathetic consideration the following:—

First, they hope that special facilities should be given at Wei-hai-wei for the training of Chinese naval officers and men by officers of the British navy. Second, they earnestly hope that this demand for a lease of Wei-hai-wei will not be followed by further territorial demands on our part even if other Powers obtain territorial concessions on account of Wei-hai-wei; otherwise there would be an endless chain of demands each founded on its predecessor. I said I would telegraph their wishes but that they must distinctly understand that they were in no way conditional to the lease of Wei-hai-wei, and I could give them no hope that territorial concessions given to other Powers would not be followed by similar demands on our part.

Sir E. Satow informed.⁽¹⁾

(1) [The Agreement between China and Great Britain for a lease of Wei-hai Wei was formally signed on the 1st July, and ratifications were exchanged the 5th October, 1898. Text in *B.F.S.P.*, XC, 16–17. A Convention between the same Powers for extension of British territory on the mainland facing Hong Kong was signed the 9th June, and ratifications were exchanged the 6th August, 1898. Text, *ib.* XC, 17–8.]

IV.—THE AFTERMATH. ATTITUDE OF JAPAN, CHINA, GERMANY AND RUSSIA (MARCH 1898–APRIL 1899).

No. 45.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Satow.

F.O. Japan 501.

Foreign Office, March 31, 1898.

Tel. (No. 21.) Very Confidential.

D. 5 P.M.

You may inform Japanese Government in strict confidence that as possession of Port Arthur by Russia seriously disturbs the balance of power in Gulf of Pechili we are compelled to demand from Chinese Government lease of Wei-hai-wei on same terms whenever it is evacuated by Japan. But we have no desire to hasten this date; and have gathered from your communication that the proposal which we believe to be in the common interest would so be regarded by the Japanese Government. We trust that it will have their concurrence and support.

No. 46.

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Japan 502.

Tokyo, April 2, 1898.

Tel. (No. 21.)

D. 9.30 P.M.

R. April 3, 8 A.M.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 21. The Japanese reply expresses concurrence in the contemplated lease after the evacuation by their forces. Should Japan hereafter find it necessary to take similar measures in order to strengthen her defences or to promote her interests, the Japanese Government trust they may count upon the concurrence and support of the British Government. They will regard with the strictest confidence verbal note of Her Majesty's Minister, and ask that their answer

may be similarly treated. I have pointed out the omission of "support" in the first paragraph. I think it indicates that they are afraid of being involved in complications.⁽¹⁾

(¹) [*Cf.* following Enclosure 2 in Despatch No. 48, Very Confidential, of Sir E. Satow :—

Note Verbale.

F.O. Japan 496.

D. April 4, 1898.

R. May 11, 1898.

The Imperial Government express their concurrence in the contemplated lease by Her Britannic Majesty's Government from China of Wei-hai Wei after the evacuation of the place by the Japanese forces.

In the event Japan should at any time in future find it necessary to take similar measures in order to strengthen her defences or to promote her interests, the Imperial Government trust that they may count upon the concurrence and support of the British Government.

The Imperial Government will regard with the strictest confidence the verbal note of Her Britannic Majesty's Minister of the 1st instant, in which the proposed step of the British Government is frankly avowed, and they bespeak for this reply, similar treatment at the hands of the Government of Her Britannic Majesty.

Guaimusho, Tokyo, April 2, 1898.]

No. 47.

Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1440.

Foreign Office, April 2, 1898.

Tel. (No. 44.)

D. 7 P.M.

Statement that we have asked for lease of Wei-hai-wei will probably be in Monday's papers, and in any case must be made by me in House of Commons on Tuesday.

Please inform German Government. Point out to them that this step is forced on us by action of Russia. Its sole object is to maintain balance of power in Gulf of Pechili, menaced by Russian occupation of Port Arthur. We believe this policy is in conformity with German views.

We do not anticipate that it will give any umbrage to German interests in Shantung, since Wei-hai-wei cannot be made a commercial port, and it could never be worth while to connect it by Railway with the peninsula. A formal undertaking on this subject would be given if desired.

We could not of course occupy till the Japanese have left the port, and it is a matter of indifference to us when this event occurs.

A. J. B.

Do not act on this instruction before Tuesday morning unless before then an announcement about Wei-hai-wei appears in the German Press or you hear from here that it has been announced in the English newspapers.—*F. B.*

No. 48.

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Japan 496.

(No. 49.) Secret.

My Lord,

Tokyo, D. April 4, 1898.

R. May 11, 1898.

On the receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 21 of the 31st March,⁽¹⁾ I embodied its contents in a verbal note, which I took to Marquis Ito in the first place. After having read it carefully, he said that it would have his assent, but that it would be necessary to report to the Emperor, and consult some of his colleagues. I next

(¹) No. 45, p. 30.

proceeded to the Foreign Department, and, in the absence of Baron Nishi, handed it to Mr. Komura, Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs. He perused it with evident satisfaction, and remarked that Japan's attitude on this question had been quite clearly stated in the answer already given on March 17th to my verbal enquiry. I think his intention in saying this was to let me understand that their assent was cordial.

On the morning of the 2nd instant, a Cabinet Council was held, and, in the afternoon, Mr. Komura brought me the written answer, of which a copy is enclosed in my immediately preceding despatch. I drew his attention to the fact that, whereas Her Majesty's Government had expressed their hope that the demand made on the Chinese Government would meet with the "concurrence and support" of Japan, the Imperial Government expressed only their concurrence, while asking for both concurrence and support in case Japan should hereafter find it necessary to adopt similar measures herself. He admitted the omission, but said it would be necessary to call another Cabinet Council before any alteration could be made in the wording, and the subject then dropped.

That evening I met Marquis Ito at dinner, who asked me if their answer had reached me. I replied in the affirmative, and made the same remark to him regarding the omission of the word "support." His Government, I said, were asking from Great Britain more than they were willing themselves to accord. He protested that this was not at all his meaning, but at the same time made no offer to alter the wording. It happened that we were seated apart from, but in full view of, the rest of the company, and I thought it best to say no more.

That afternoon a telegram had been circulated in Tokyo, coming from the Japanese newspaper correspondent who had previously telegraphed the news of the demand for a lease of Wei-hai Wei, dated Peking, April 1st, which stated that Great Britain had sent war vessels into Port Arthur, and had informed the Chinese Government that, if they did not consent to give a lease of Wei-hai Wei, Great Britain would occupy Port Arthur, no matter whether it had been ceded to Russia or not. I found, however, that in spite of the general accuracy of the reports hitherto telegraphed by the correspondent in question, the report was not credited, and in answer to the questions of my colleagues who were present I treated it as an entire fabrication.

With regard to the omission of the word "support" in the Japanese answer, I have no doubt that it was intentional. The Japanese Government are evidently afraid of giving umbrage to the three Powers whom they, on the whole, believe to be acting in concert in Far Eastern affairs. Hence their marked desire that these negotiations should be kept secret. They felt, moreover, that, if they promised support as well as concurrence, they would be completely committed to Her Majesty's Government, without any guarantee of protection against the hostility which they would probably incur at the hands of the three Powers. Another factor in the matter may be that they wished to avoid having to give instructions to the Japanese Minister in Peking to support the demand for Wei-hai Wei, because, as Marquis Ito remarked to me, the Chinese cannot be trusted, and would be sure to let it be known that there was an understanding between Great Britain and Japan.

If the understanding became known, it might affect the course of negotiations which I learn from a good source are going on with Russia in respect of Korea.

The sensational telegram, previously referred to, reached Tokyo at noon on the 2nd instant and was before the Cabinet while they were discussing the draft, but, on the whole, it does not seem to have influenced the wording of that document.

I may add that a leading member of the Cabinet said to me privately that both Russia and Germany were believed to have had designs upon Wei-hai Wei, and that the Japanese Government, recognising that China was not strong enough to maintain possession, greatly preferred that it should be occupied by Great Britain.

I have, &c.

ERNEST SATOW.

No. 49.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir C. MacDonald.*F.O. China 1338.
Tel. (No. 137.)*Foreign Office, April 6, 1898.*
D. 11 A.M.

In case you should find that Russian Government have made mention to Chinese Government of our recent negotiations with Russia for the purpose of arriving at a general understanding, you should make it clearly understood that the basis of our proposals as far as they related to China was the maintenance of the integrity of that Empire and of the authority of the Central Government.

No. 50.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Satow.*F.O. Japan 501.
Tel. (No. 22.)*Foreign Office, April 6, 1898.*
D. 1 P.M.

Your telegram No. 21 of 2nd.

Her Majesty's Government are very sensible of the friendly manner in which Japan has received our communication about Wei-Hai Wei.

Please inform them that the Chinese Government have promised us a reversionary lease on the same conditions as the one granted to Russia of Ports Arthur and Talienwan, to take effect on the evacuation by Japan.

No. 51.

*The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Satow.*F.O. Japan 501.
Tel. (No. 23.)*Foreign Office, April 6, 1898.*
D. 1 P.M.

Have you any indication as to what are likely to be the similar measures to strengthen the defences and promote the interests of Japan for which the Japanese Government trust hereafter to have our concurrence and support?

No. 52.

*Sir F. Lascelles to Herr von Bülow.⁽¹⁾*F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1438.
Your Excellency,*Berlin, April 20, 1898.*

In accordance with instructions which I have received from my Government, I have the honour to make the following declaration to your Excellency:—

England formally declares that, in establishing herself at Wei-hai Wei, she has no intention of injuring or contesting the interests of Germany in the Province of

⁽¹⁾ [Enclosed in despatch No. 125, Lascelles to Salisbury, D. April 21, 1898, R. April 25. The first intimation on this subject was given to the German Government on 4th April (*v. G.P.*, XIV, I, pp. 161-3). It appears that the passage in italics was added at the German request.]

Shantung, or of creating difficulties for her in that province. *It is especially understood that England will not construct any railroad communication from Wei-hai Wei, and the district leased therewith, into the interior of the provinces.*

I avail, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 53.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1438.

(No. 168.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. May 26, 1898.

R. May 30, 1898.

At the dinner which the Emperor gave on the 24th instant to celebrate the Queen's birthday I had the honour of being placed next to His Majesty, who conversed with me almost uninterruptedly, during the whole time it lasted, with his usual vivacity and amiability. Much that His Majesty said was couched in a jocose vein, but there were some parts of his conversation which will be of interest to your Lordship.

His Majesty spoke at considerable length of Prince Henry's voyage to China, and expressed his high gratification at the very cordial reception which His Royal Highness had met with in all the British possessions where he had touched. On my observing that this could not have been a matter of surprise to His Majesty, the Emperor replied that he had felt by no means certain how the British authorities in the Far East would regard his action in going to Kiao-chau, and, in fact, Prince Henry had more than once been asked whether he was going to China for the purpose of fighting England. His Royal Highness had very properly replied that he appreciated the compliment to his courage which the question implied, but that he was not prepared with the two ships at his disposal to attack the naval forces of Her Majesty in the Pacific. The very fact, however, that the question had been asked was a proof that His Majesty's action had been completely misunderstood. For years past he had been anxious to obtain a coaling station in China. He had frequently sounded Her Majesty's Government on the subject through his Ambassador in London, but the reply had always been discouraging, and Count Hatzfeldt had reported that there was no chance of Her Majesty's Government consenting to the acquisition by Germany of a coaling station in China, unless they obtained enormous compensation for themselves. Under these circumstances, he turned in another direction, and it was with the consent of the Emperor of Russia that he had gone to Kiao-chau. In doing so he had no hostile intention towards England, in fact, he highly approved of our policy of the "open door." I ventured here to interrupt His Majesty with the words "and equality of treatment." His Majesty did not notice my interruption, and went on to speak of Prince Henry's reception at Peking, observing that it was an historical event, which might have far-reaching consequences, that His Royal Highness should have been received by the Empress-mother.

His Majesty also alluded to the speech recently delivered by Mr. Chamberlain at Birmingham, which he believed truly reflected public opinion in England, which now had come round to the idea that alliances might be advantageous. His Majesty, however, doubted whether it was judicious to proclaim so openly the necessity of an alliance for England, as it might make the Power with which she might seek an alliance demand heavy terms.⁽¹⁾ He doubted whether, in spite of all that had been said in the newspapers, an alliance between England and the United States would

⁽¹⁾ [The famous "long-spoon" speech of the 13th May. It was commented on angrily in the Russian press and by Russian diplomats, v. F.O. Germany 1438, Sir F. Lascelles, No. 157, of the 20th May, 1898.]

ever be made. At this time, no doubt, there was a better understanding between the two countries than had ever existed before, and the United States were no doubt anxious to secure the good-will of England so long as their war with Spain lasted. As soon as that was over, it was probable that the United States would revert to their old system of maintaining their independence, and avoiding anything in the shape of an European alliance. Then, as regards Germany, His Majesty would view with the greatest pleasure a thoroughly good understanding with England, and he had noticed with satisfaction that the tone of the English press towards Germany had greatly improved, but it must be clearly understood that Germany did not intend to go to war with Russia for the purpose of driving her out of China. His Majesty repeated that he had gone to Kiao-chau with the consent of Russia, and that he saw no reason to attack her in that country. He did not share the fear which the Russian advance through Manchuria seemed to have caused in England. Russia would require several generations before she could assimilate the countries she had already taken, and the fear that she would destroy the Chinese Empire was not likely to be realised during the coming century. But, even supposing Germany were willing to fight England's battles in China, how could she do so? If His Majesty were to attempt to do so, Germany itself would at once be invaded both by France and Russia, and what assistance could the British fleet give her then?

His Majesty alluded to the occupation of Wei-hai Wei, which, he said, would entail a very great expense, without any equivalent advantage. He had had surveys made of Wei-hai Wei about two years ago, and gave up all thoughts of establishing a coaling station there. It required a garrison of at least 6,000 men, in addition to a considerable fleet, to protect it, and there was not sufficient depth of water in the harbour to float an iron-clad. He could have understood our taking possession of Chusan, but Wei-hai Wei would, he thought, be a useless expense, and indicated a departure from that practical common sense with which Englishmen were usually credited.⁽²⁾

I replied that I understood that it had been thought necessary, in consequence of the action of Russia, to take possession of some port in the Gulf of Pechili itself, in order to restore our influence at Peking, which had been injured by the Russian advance in Manchuria. It was rather, I believe, the geographical position of Peking than the advantages of Wei-hai Wei as a port which had determined the action of Her Majesty's Government.

The Emperor replied that this might be so, but he believed that an equal effect would have been produced at Peking if we had taken possession of a port which would have been more useful to us.

His Majesty, in referring to the change of tone in the English press, said that he had felt obliged to make representations at St. Petersburg with regard to the attacks against Germany in which the Russian press had lately indulged, and the consequence was that the tone of the Russian newspapers had again changed.

During the whole of this conversation, which must have been overheard by Herr von Bülow, who was seated beside me, the Emperor's manner was most cordial and amiable, and although some of the criticisms upon the action of Her Majesty's Government may appear to be severe, I received the impression that they were made in a very friendly spirit.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

⁽²⁾ [In a telegram to his Foreign Office of the 6th April, the Emperor wrote that England thus acquired two neighbours, "of whom one (*i.e.*, Russia) is hostile to her." *G.P.* XIV, I, 164, *v.* also 168, where he says Germany may need England's help.]

No. 54.

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Japan 498.

(No. 119.) Very Confidential.

Tokyo, D. July 2, 1898.

My Lord,

R. August 6, 1898.

On the occasion of a complimentary visit which I paid to-day to the new Minister-President, Count Okuma, his Excellency observed that the development of the Chinese question during the last six or seven months was a great source of anxiety to this country. If China could be stimulated to take measures for her own defence, well and good, but if on the other hand she were to remain as weak as she now is, and the Peking capital were to fall under the control of an ambitious Power, there would be great danger to the general interest. The collapse and partition of a State as populous as the whole continent of Europe could not fail to cause a great confusion, and Japan, being the nearest neighbour of China, had a vital interest in avoiding the outbreak of a conflagration lest the sparks should spread in her own direction.

I replied that the maintenance of the integrity of the Chinese Empire was a cardinal point in the policy of Her Majesty's Government, but that it was to be feared that other Powers had different views, and to one in particular was attributed the design of eventually laying hands on the whole of North China.

In view of the rumours that have been set afloat that Russia is endeavouring to turn the attention of Japan towards the Philippines, and to suggest her obtaining compensation there for the loss of prospects of continental acquisition, I mentioned what I had heard to Count Okuma. He replied that he should regard any further extension to the south as a fresh source of weakness, as indeed the Island of Formosa had proved, though that could, of course, not be undone now. Japan, he considered, was not in a position to indulge in a policy of territorial expansion, and she must confine herself entirely to strengthening her means of defending what she already possesses.

I have, &c.

ERNEST SATOW.

No. 55.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir C. MacDonald.

F.O. China 1339.

Foreign Office, July 22, 1898.

Tel. (No. 230.)

D. 1.30 P.M.

If you see no objection to doing so, you may inform Yâmen that Her Majesty's Government will support them against any Power which commits an act of aggression on China because China has granted to a British subject permission to make or support any railway or similar public work.

No. 56.

Sir C. MacDonald to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Peking, July 25, 1898.

F.O. China 1341.

D. 11.40 A.M.

Tel. (No. 237.)

R. 2.40 P.M.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 230.

Yâmen say no aggression or threat of such has taken place and they hope never will. They [? express] most grateful thanks for promise of support.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [This matter was referred to in an answer to a question in the House of Commons on the 9th August.]

MINUTE.

August 8, 1898, 3 P.M.

I saw Chinese Minister this afternoon. I informed him that Russia had no right whatever to object to a mortgage loan being made by the Hong Kong bank to the Newchang railway: and that I strongly advised China to pay no regard to her objection.—S.

No. 57.

Mr. Balfour to Sir C. Scott.

F.O. Russia 1558.

Tel. (No. 215.)

Foreign Office, August 17, 1898.

Please call Count Mouravieff's attention to M. Pavloff's action in connection with Newchwang Railway. Point out to him that it is inconsistent with the treaty rights conceded to this country by China and with the pledges of Russia that those treaty rights shall be respected.

It is impossible for Her Majesty's Government to acquiesce in an arrangement which while excluding England from her share in the railway enterprises of Manchuria leaves all China open to the railway enterprise of Russia. Such a pretension if persisted in must inevitably produce the most serious international difficulties. It has already aroused in this country a feeling of great exasperation.

No. 58.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3396.

(No. 442.) Confidential.

Paris, D. September 8, 1898.

My Lord,

R. September 10, 1898.

M. Delcassé said to me yesterday that he had been very happy to learn by his advices from St. Petersburg that there had been a relaxation of the tension between Great Britain and Russia in relation to affairs in the Far East, and that, according to his information, there was every prospect of a speedy and satisfactory settlement of the differences which had arisen between the two countries over their interests in China.

I replied that, without having any special information on the subject, I had good reason to hope that he was right.

M. Delcassé observed that, as he had stated to me at our last interview, he had taken much interest in this question, and had not failed to let it be known in St. Petersburg that the Government of the Republic feel great anxiety that there should be no serious misunderstanding between Great Britain and Russia, believing as they do that there is no insuperable obstacle to the maintenance of harmony between them.

His Excellency implied that he considered that the language which he had caused to be held at St. Petersburg had not been without effect.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Russia 1556.

(No. 355.) Very Confidential.

St. Petersburg, D. November 2, 1898.

My Lord,

R. November 7, 1898.

I have had the first opportunity of conversation with M. de Witte, who was good enough to call on me yesterday.

I told his Excellency that both Count Mouravieff and Count Lamsdorff had expressed a wish that I should have an early opportunity of learning from himself his views of the proposed base of Agreement between our Governments on the question of railway concessions in China, as the details of this question more particularly concerned his Department as Finance Minister, and that they had encouraged me to speak frankly and openly with him on this subject.

I said that his Excellency was already aware that the sole aim of Her Majesty's Government in this question was to retain, for our trade and enterprise in China, equal opportunities, with a fair field and no favour, and that the object of the proposed Agreement was to prevent the development of the commerce and enterprise of both countries being blocked by the exercise of foreign diplomatic influence at Peking, in opposing the grant of railway concessions or loans for their construction, or by the creation of artificial barriers such as differential treatment or preferential railway rates in favour of any particular nation.

The idea, as I understand it, being that it was quite possible to reconcile the respective interests of the private enterprise of both countries which seemed to be mainly concerned with separate geographical spheres of action by mutual agreement and concessions, without the necessity of making their rival schemes the subject of irritating diplomatic questions between the two Governments.

M. de Witte said he entirely shared this view, and he desired to assure me, as he had often assured Sir Nicholas O'Connor, that there was nothing he had more at heart than the establishment of a thoroughly sincere and satisfactory understanding, and of frank and friendly relations between Russia and Great Britain on this and on all other questions. He was firmly convinced that, rightly understood, there were no antagonistic interests in any way dividing the two countries in China or in any other part of the world; between Russia and Germany, and between Russia and Austria, there might be interests difficult to reconcile, but between Russia and England there ought to be none.

These views were not merely platonic or disinterested personal views—these were those firmly impressed on him in his position as Russian Minister of Finance; he had absolute need of a good and frank understanding between Russia and England, the greatest commercial nation in the world, and the continuance of any unsatisfactory relations or misunderstandings between the two countries or their Governments was a positive injury to the real interests of Russia, and a greivous impediment in his way as Minister of Finance.

M. de Witte then proceeded to explain to me how Russia had been involuntarily, and without any clear design, forced forward in the direction of expansion towards the Far East—the history of the acquisition of the Amour Provinces, which were unproductive, but, once acquired, had to be protected—as soon as the weakness of China became painfully apparent—by the construction of the Trans-Siberian Railway—the consequent necessity of endeavouring to make this distant possession so far productive as to recoup the Government for some part of the great cost of its administration, by obtaining an outlet for the railway to the open sea, the unexpected action of Germany in getting possession of territory on the Gulf of Pechili, which created a perhaps unnecessary panic, and forced Russia to take hurried counter measures, which might possibly have gone too far.

These were all now things of the past, and had to be accepted; Russia had got her

connection by the line through Manchuria to the open sea, and had nothing more to desire. Her distant possessions were, to a great extent, Danaid possessions entailing a constant drain on her finances and giving no returns; even the Caucasus and the Trans-Caspian Provinces did not as yet return to the State any profit to compare with the costly burden of administration, and the pressing interest of Russia was to develop with profit her rich natural resources.

His Excellency cited these facts to convince me that Russia's interests were not, as generally supposed, in the direction of further expansion or of adding to her existing responsibilities, but centred in a peaceful policy of consolidation.

He begged me, however, to remember that he was speaking to me quite confidentially and unofficially, as foreign policy was not in his domain, but he thought that I should find Count Mouravieff animated by similar views.

Turning, then, to the question of the proposed Agreement on the railway question in China, he told me frankly that he did not regard paper Agreements on such concrete questions as the best way of securing that frank and satisfactory understanding on which both Governments apparently desired to see their future relations firmly established.

"Remember," he said, "that the past is beyond recall, and what we have now to consider is the future of our relations.

"Mistakes have no doubt been committed on both sides under the impression of possibly unreasonable distrust and suspicion of motives and aims. They should be forgotten, and a new departure made.

"I do not regard the suggested terms of Agreement as offering a sufficiently safe security to either side; it would, in my opinion, be almost impossible to word the Agreement in such a way as to guard against the possibility of an evasion of its conditions, and it would perhaps only give rise in the future to frequent irritating questions between the Governments as to the proper interpretation of its terms.

"We must also remember that we are not alone in seeking railway concessions in China, and the delimitation of spheres of interest, unless part of a general international agreement, might give rise to difficulties, as our respective banks might lend their assistance to foreign enterprises, and while keeping ostensibly to the letter violate the spirit of the agreement between the Governments, and even in the event of strained relations between the two nations in other parts of the world, some loophole might be found in the wording of this Agreement to take advantage of, and exercise, counter-pressure."

His Excellency then went on to say that, in his opinion, a far more solid basis for our future relations would be established by a general Agreement concluded between the two Governments and ratified by their respective Sovereigns, recording a firm determination to establish their relations on a footing of frank and friendly understanding and engaging that, on any occasion of a question arising in any part of the world which either Government regarded as involving a possible conflict between their respective interests, they would at once submit it to frank and friendly discussion between them, with a firm resolve to seek its satisfactory adjustment by a due regard to the legitimate interests of both.

He was not a diplomatist himself, but he thought it must be in the power of professional diplomacy to draft such an Agreement, and if concluded, the spirit of it sincerely adopted and acted on by both Governments would gradually find its way into the hearts and minds of the people of their countries, and be reflected in the organs of the public press.

As regards China and rival railway and other enterprises all these questions could, he thought, be easily adjusted under some such general Agreement, and as an earnest of the sincerity of Russia's disclaimer of any desire to place obstacles in the way of the free development of British commerce, he did not think there would be any great objection to acceding to our wish to have Talienwan declared a free port.

M. de Witte concluded by begging me to regard his remarks as quite unofficial, but said that he had little doubt that Count Mouravieff, who would return to

St. Petersburg in a few days, entertained similar views, and that he was convinced that the desire for an arrangement, such as he had indicated, faithfully represented the views of the Emperor and of all His Majesty's Ministers in Russia.

I have, &c.

CHARLES S. SCOTT.

MINUTE.

I am afraid that if we concluded an agreement in M. de Witte's language it would be a good deal laughed at.—S.

De Witte's proposal is derisory.—A. J. B.

No. 60.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Lord Currie.

F.O. Italy 797.

(No. 26.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 15, 1899.⁽¹⁾

The Italian Ambassador called on me this afternoon, and asked what view Her Majesty's Government took of the Italian proposal to establish an Italian station and sphere of influence on the coast of Chekiang and the adjacent islands. He informed me that he believed the Chinese Government to be willing to make the concession. I replied to him that, after having duly enquired into the question, I did not see that any British interest could be injuriously affected, so long as he did not propose to enter into the drainage valley of the Yang-tsze, and that it would always be a matter of great satisfaction to us to have the Italians for neighbours, and to concur in any arrangement which could increase the prosperity of their commerce. I said this on the assumption that the Chinese Government were willing to make the concession in question. Something had been dropped by Admiral Canevaro to the effect that, if the Chinese Government were not willing to give that assent, force should be used. To this procedure Her Majesty's Government would have grave objection. But from the communications which had recently taken place, I did not imagine that this intention was definitely entertained by the Italian Government. The Italian Ambassador assured me that I was correct in that belief; and that he thinks it must have been some misunderstanding of Admiral Canevaro's words which had caused your Excellency to attribute this design to the Italian Government.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

⁽¹⁾ [Much subsequent negotiation took place over this question, which was ultimately dropped.]

No. 61.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Bax-Ironside.⁽¹⁾

F.O. China 1380.

Foreign Office, April 30, 1899.

Tel. (No. 76.)

D. 3.30 P.M.

Notes were signed and exchanged yesterday⁽²⁾ by Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg and Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, recording agreement arrived at in regard to railways in China.

⁽¹⁾ [Chargé d'Affaires at Peking, in absence of Sir C. MacDonald.]

⁽²⁾ [Sic. The text of the Notes is printed in *B.F.S.P.*, Vol XCI, pp. 91-4, and is given there as on April 28, 1899.]

Arrangement is, in substance, as follows :—

1. Russia engages not to seek for herself or on behalf of Russian subjects or other railway Concessions in Yang-tsze basin,⁽³⁾ and not to place obstacles either directly or indirectly in the way of railway enterprises in that region supported by the British Government.
2. Similar engagement, *mutatis mutandis*, by Great Britain with regard to railway Concessions north of the Great Wall.
3. The two Powers having no intention of infringing in any way the sovereign rights of China or existing Treaties, agree to communicate to the Chinese Government the present arrangement, which, by averting all cause of complications between them, is of a nature to serve the interests of China herself.

You should concert with your Russian colleague for communicating the above general Agreement to the Chinese Government.

Supplementary notes were also exchanged providing that the above general arrangement is not to infringe in any way the rights acquired by the British and Chinese Corporation under their Loan Contract in regard to the Shanhaikuan-Newchwang line, and that the Chinese Government may appoint an English engineer and a European accountant to supervise the construction of the line and the expenditure of the money appropriated to it.

It remains understood that this fact does not constitute a right of property or foreign control, and that the line in question remains a Chinese line under Chinese control and cannot be alienated to a non-Chinese Company.

As regards the extension to Sin Minting from the point where the line branches off to Newchwang, it is further agreed that it is to be constructed by China, who may permit European, not necessarily British, engineers to periodically inspect it and certify that the work is being properly executed.

⁽³⁾ [In answer to a question in the House of Commons on the 18th May it was stated "that the Yang-tsze Basin has been defined as the provinces adjoining the Yang-tsze River, and Honan and Chékiang." *Parl. Deb.*, 4th ser., LXXI, p. 920.]

[NOTE.—The following extracts from Sir E. Satow's private correspondence from Tokyo are given together, as affording a general comment on the situation from January to April, 1898.]

Sir E. Satow to Lord Salisbury.

February 24, 1898.

"Ito is evidently his own Foreign Minister."

Id. to id.

March 23, 1898.

" As he (Ito) says, the concession of railway construction to Port Arthur means practically that Manchuria will be in the hands of Russia. Holding that view he would not care very much whether Port Arthur was a fortified Russian port or not."

Sir E. Satow to Vice-Admiral Sir Ed. Seymour.⁽¹⁾

March 28, 1898.

"I am afraid the efforts of His Majesty's Government to prevent China being taken by the throat are not destined to command either sympathy or success. We gave the whole position away two years ago when Mr. Balfour declared in a speech at Bristol,⁽²⁾ that there was no objection to Russia obtaining an outlet to the Pacific. We have tried to insist on her being contented with a commercial port, but that is not what she wants, which is a naval base."

⁽¹⁾ British Admiral on the China Station.

⁽²⁾ February 5, 1896.

CHAPTER II.

GREAT BRITAIN, GERMANY AND PORTUGAL, 1898-9.⁽¹⁾

I.—ANGLO-GERMAN RELATIONS (JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1898).

No. 62.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. M. Grierson to Sir F. Lascelles.

(Enclosure in Despatch from Sir F. Lascelles, No. 27.)⁽²⁾

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1437.

(No. 1/98.) Confidential.

Sir,

Berlin, January 19, 1898.

I have the honour to report to your Excellency that on the 15th instant I was invited to join a shooting party by His Majesty the Emperor. After the first drive, His Majesty called me up, spoke in the most friendly manner, and took me in his own carriage to the place where luncheon was provided some two miles off. The conversation first turned on Egypt, and His Majesty displayed a most accurate knowledge of the movements of our troops, mentioning even the names of the battalions. He enquired whether I had any news of French movements on the Upper Nile, to which I replied that I had only seen newspaper reports, upon which he said that he had no news either.

Passing to the Kiao-chau incident, he said that he had had our Hong Kong agreement with China copied word for word in drawing up his agreement as to the leasing of Kiao-chau, and that he was extremely satisfied with the manner in which his orders had been carried out. On my asking whether with the short service of the marines he would not find a difficulty in keeping up the garrison, he replied no, and that all ranks were rejoiced to go. It counted as active service (*i.e.*, double for service and pension), the officers had received outfit allowance, and all ranks received field pay and rations. Even the one-year volunteers had volunteered to accompany the battalion.

He then began one of the tirades, with which he has frequently favoured me, against British policy. He said that for eight years he had striven to be friendly with Great Britain to gain her alliance, and to work hand in hand with her, but had failed. We should never have such a chance again, for never again would a grandson of the Queen of Great Britain be on the German Throne. He had his own subjects to look after, and could not be expected to be the Viceroy and guardian of British interests on the continent of Europe and elsewhere. So, finding that Great Britain refused to ally herself with him, he had to go on ahead alone and further German interests. I said nothing to all this, until, turning round to me, he said: "Tell me, have you any policy? What is your idea of the policy?" Thus directly questioned, I replied that I was no politician, but that the idea I had was that, if an alliance were possible, it would have to be either with the Triple or Dual Alliance. To join either would embroil us with the other. We did not desire to embroil ourselves with anybody,

⁽¹⁾ [NOTE.—The earlier stages of the discussion between Great Britain and Portugal are summarised in Bertie's Memorandum of the 1st May, 1898 (No. 65). The German side of the story is fully presented in *G.P. XIV*, Pt. 1, chapter 92. The most authoritative accounts of German policy from 1890 to 1914 are in Erich Brandenburg, *From Bismarck to the World War* (English translation, 1927), and Otto Hammann, *World Policy of Germany* (English translation, 1927).]

⁽²⁾ [Not reproduced.]

we were strong enough to hold our own against either group, and it was unlikely that both would combine against us. To this he replied: "You are mistaken, they can combine, and they *shall* combine." (This latter with great emphasis.) "Socialism and other causes will force the monarchs of the continent to combine for mutual assistance, and the yellow races of the East are our greatest danger." He then mentioned the allegorical picture he had drawn of Europe combining to resist the yellow race, and said that it would yet be realised.

He then asked if I had seen the picture of himself in "Punch" as Emperor of China, and said that the Empress had seen it first and was furious at it, but that he did not mind and thought it rather a good joke. "But," he said, "your people do not realise how monarchs are looked upon on the continent, and while those personal attacks are made upon me you cannot expect the German press to remain quiet."

His Majesty was in excellent spirits and looked better than I have seen him for a long time. His tone throughout, even when I hinted as above that we were quite able to look after ourselves, was friendly and gracious, and at luncheon afterwards I sat opposite him and had a good deal of pleasant conversation on indifferent subjects.

I have, &c.

J. M. GRIERSON, *Military Attaché.*

No. 63.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1437.

(No. 36.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. February 1, 1898.

R. February 7, 1898.

The Emperor called upon me this afternoon and remained with me for nearly an hour, conversing in the most friendly and agreeable manner upon a great variety of topics.

I took the opportunity of expressing to His Majesty the satisfaction with which I had received Herr von Buelow's assurances of his desire for a friendly understanding with England, and of his conviction that, as the interests of the two countries demanded the existence of good relations between them, it was only patience that was required to put matters right.

His Majesty replied with some warmth, for eight years after he came to the throne he had done his best to carry out this idea by every means in his power, and he appealed to the letters he had addressed to, and the conversations he had had with, your Lordship as a confirmation of his statement. But what had been the result? On the last occasion of his visiting England he had been assailed by the press directly and personally, and since then the personal attacks against him had so much increased and become so violent that it had become impossible for him to return to England. He had therefore been compelled to change his tactics and to do his best to further German interests alone.

I replied that if His Majesty would allow me to speak perfectly openly, I would venture to suggest that he paid too much importance to the utterances of the press, which in England was perfectly free and entirely independent of any sort of Government control or even influence.

On my observing that the tone of the press on both sides had become more moderate of late. His Majesty said that this was so, but considering the effect which had been produced in Germany by the personal attacks upon him, in which, until quite recently, the English press had indulged, and which were far worse than anything

even in the Chauvinist French press, he feared that a good deal more patience would be required before the friendly footing upon which the two countries formerly stood could be restored.

I have, &c.

FRANK LASCELLES.

No. 64.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1272.

(No. 34.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. February 10, 1898.

My Lord,

R. February 14, 1898.

M. de Bülow's statement on the foreign relations of Germany has met with general approval here. Count Goluchowski, who is on intimate terms with the new German Foreign Secretary, referred to it in laudatory terms in conversation with me yesterday, and, in reply to a remark from me that M. de Bülow seemed to attach value to harmonious relations with ourselves, His Excellency observed that his friend and former Colleague had all along been in favour of a thoroughly cordial understanding with England.

This gave me an opportunity of asking Count Goluchowski what he had noticed on this point during his visit to Berlin last year. I knew, I said, that he had been at some pains to remove the tension then existing.

Count Goluchowski replied that he had found that at bottom the feeling towards us was much better than he had expected, and this was more especially the case as regards the Emperor William, with whom, both then and since, he had exchanged views on the subject. There existed last year at Berlin influences hostile to us—and here Count Goluchowski as good as included that of Baron Marschall amongst them. But those were mostly among subordinates ("les sous-ordres"), and since then great changes had taken place. There had been a great weeding-out ("épurement"), and M. de Bülow had done much in this respect, besides effectually taking the direction of Foreign Affairs into his own hands.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

II.—THE ANGLO-GERMAN CONVENTIONS OF AUGUST 20, 1898 (MAY 1898–JULY 1899).

No. 65.

Memorandum by Mr. Bertie on England and Portugal in Africa.

F.O. Portugal (Africa) 1859.

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, May 1, 1898.

The time seems to have come for a decision as to the policy to be followed in regard to the African Possessions of Portugal.

Portugal is in desperate straits for money to meet her ordinary engagements, and she will soon have to provide also for the Award in the matter of the Delagoa Bay Railway.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [NOTE.—In 1889 a dispute with Great Britain arose in consequence of the seizure by the Portuguese of the railway to the Transvaal. The dispute was referred to arbitration, and in 1900 Portugal was compelled to pay nearly one million pounds in compensation to the shareholders.]

The Governor-General of Portuguese East Africa, Major Mousinho de Albuquerque, has been in Paris, London and Berlin to take soundings in regard to the disposition of France, England and Germany. Since then he has conferred with the Portuguese Government and M. de Soveral, and he is now on his way back to Africa.

M. de Soveral may be expected to return to London from Lisbon in a few days.

Her Majesty's Minister at Lisbon, in a letter dated the 26th April, states that all his information goes to show that Major Mousinho is determined to maintain the best possible relations with Germany and the Transvaal *compatible* with a close understanding with England. He has stated to our Minister, Sir Hugh MacDonell, in private conversation, that he had been much struck by the militarism pervading every class in Germany, but that his visit to Berlin had opened his eyes to the danger to his country from that quarter. He said that he entirely concurred in M. de Soveral's opinion that no time should be lost in coming to an understanding on the basis proposed by Her Majesty's Government, viz., that a loan should be raised in England on the guarantee of the revenues of the Portuguese Colonies, including Lourenço Marques, coupled with a thorough understanding with Her Majesty's Government.

Major Mousinho, who is a strong supporter of the King, charges the Monarchical parties with having undermined the Throne, and with having played into the hands of the Republicans. He believes that by their maladministration and corruption they have paved the way for a subversive movement in Portugal as soon as it breaks out in Spain.

Sir H. MacDonell thinks that Major Mousinho has in view a dictatorship as the sole means of salvation for his country.

Sir Hugh MacDonell says that bread, coal and other necessities have reached prohibitive prices; that distress and destitution prevail throughout Portugal, and that the state of affairs is such that a crisis seems inevitable. The King, he says, seems to be blind or indifferent to the reality of the danger to the Dynasty.

Sir Hugh calls attention to our growing unpopularity in Portugal, due to the sympathy and favour which we are generally believed to show to the cause of the United States, and he says that though it is perfectly well understood that the only hope of salvation for the dynasty lies in England, her intervention in support of the Throne would probably meet with even less approval by the nation than might have been the case a year or two back.

The position in which the negotiations between Mr. Chamberlain and M. de Soveral were left last June was as follows :—

M. de Soveral had, for some time past urged the advisability of an understanding between England and Portugal; and at the beginning of May Mr. Chamberlain had suggested the possibility of an arrangement by which England would guarantee to Portugal her African possessions in return for an Agreement under which there should not be, without British concurrence, any access to the Transvaal from the sea except by the existing port and railway of Lourenço Marquez, both of which should be worked by an Anglo-Portuguese Company who would carry out all necessary works of improvement, and provide money for the Berne Award. Such Company to have some Directors to represent each Government. The Portuguese Government further to undertake not to confirm or grant any concessions within a specified radius of Lourenço Marquez without the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government.

Mr. Chamberlain also suggested that it might be politic for the Portuguese Government to raise a loan in London on mortgage of all their African Possessions, inclusive of the railways as well as the general revenues. This he considered would give justification for the British territorial guarantee.

The Portuguese Government were, however, convinced that public opinion in Portugal would be opposed to any alteration in the *status quo*, and would be strongly supported by the moral influence of Germany and France; and M. de Soveral made the following counter-proposal on behalf of his Government :—

“The Portuguese Government will accept a loan secured on the revenues of their possessions in Africa, excepting the province of Lourenço Marquez (not

including Mozambique), and will guarantee England that the *status quo* in the province shall never be even indirectly affected. The Government will leave a part of the loan in the hands of Rothschilds to pay the Berne Award and for works of development at the port and on the railway at Lourenço Marquez. The Government would assume complete responsibility to the English Government that they would not at any time assign the revenues of Lourenço Marquez to any financial operation."

M. de Soveral believed that the Portuguese Government would be willing to add an undertaking "not to grant any concession in the province without the consent of the British Government." In this he was, however, mistaken, for they said that it was impossible to accept an arrangement which they considered derogated from the sovereign rights of Portugal, and would certainly be rejected by the Cortes and by public opinion.

Thereupon Mr. Chamberlain suggested that the Portuguese Government might agree not to give any concessions at all within a certain radius, no mention being made of the necessity for British consent.

M. de Soveral having in the course of the discussion referred to a guarantee of territory, Mr. Chamberlain pointed out to him that such a guarantee had formed part of a proposal made on the 10th May, and was the price offered for practical control of the harbour and railway. Portugal had declined the proposal, and had offered an assurance of the maintenance of the *status quo* which England held that she already possessed, as, under the Treaty of 1891, she had the right of pre-emption which entitled her to oppose any alienation by lease, concession or otherwise of any part of the territory south of the Zambesi. In return, however, for such an acknowledgment by Portugal, Her Majesty's Government might be willing to assist the Portuguese Government in obtaining a loan; the alternative being a territorial guarantee in exchange for practical control of the port and railway of Lourenço Marquez.

M. de Soveral replied that a loan could be obtained by other means on the security of the railway and other possessions. Mr. Chamberlain reminded him that he held that the Portuguese Government were not entitled to do this and Her Majesty's Government would certainly regard it as an unfriendly act.

M. de Soveral said that he must again consult his Government. No further communication was, however, received from him, and the negotiations dropped. Probably at that time he was prepared to go further than the Portuguese Government and they would not give him authority to carry out his views.

Since then the state of things has considerably changed, and the views of the Portuguese Government are not the same as they were. Wherever they turned for money they are invited to throw in Lourenço Marquez and its port and railway as security. Moreover they now feel less suspicious as to our intentions in regard to their African possessions, and more in dread than they were of the designs of other foreign Powers, especially of Germany, who, since her intervention on behalf of the German holders of the Greek debt and her seizure of Kiao-chau Bay, has given the Portuguese Government cause to think that a German protest in regard to the grievances of the German holders of the Portuguese debt might be followed up by a seizure of Portuguese territory. Portugal has some tempting possessions; the Azores, Madeira, Cape Verde Islands, St. Thomas, Angola, Lourenço Marquez, Mozambique and Macao. At the southern extremity of Angola there is Tiger Bay, which is the only good harbour on the south-west coast of Africa and would make German South-West Africa a valuable possession which it never can be with only its present sea outlet Swakoop Mouth. It should also be borne in mind that Germany has by no means given up all hope of some day establishing German preponderance in the eastern approaches to the Transvaal.

With regard to the suggestion that in return for a Portuguese promise to maintain the *status quo* and not to grant concessions at or near Lourenço Marquez, Her Majesty's Government might assist Portugal in obtaining a loan, I would point out that unless such assistance takes the form of a guarantee of interest or guarantee of

territory, Her Majesty's Government have no special means of aiding the Portuguese Government financially to the extent required by Portugal, for to successfully float an ordinary commercial loan, it would first be necessary for Portugal to negotiate for a composition with her existing creditors. This might lead to an agitation, promoted by Germany, for an International Commission of Enquiry and the consequent hypothecation under international control for the benefit of German and other creditors of the African possessions of Portugal, inclusive of Delagoa Bay. Even if England were to offer to guarantee the interest on a loan a similar result might ensue, for existing creditors might prevent its flotation by entering a caveat with the Committee of the Stock Exchange until they were satisfied, and their terms might not be acceptable.

If the continued existence of Portugal as a Monarchy with its present Possessions is considered by Her Majesty's Government as such an advantage to us from both a political and a naval point of view, that it is thought worth while to make serious efforts to prevent that country and its Colonies from falling under the influence, if not into the power, of other nations, the alternatives which seem to offer themselves are :—

1. Promotion by Her Majesty's Government of a Company for the purpose of making advances of money sufficient only for the Berne Award, and improvements in the harbour and railway of Lourenço Marquez. The security asked to be an undertaking by Portugal not without the consent of Her Majesty's Government to alienate in any way by cession, concession, lease, or otherwise any part of the bay or the approaches to the Transvaal from the sea, and not to confirm or grant without the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government any concessions within a specified radius of Lourenço Marquez.
2. Guarantee by England of the interest on a loan secured on the revenues of all the Portuguese Colonial Possessions, such loan being for the purpose of paying off the floating debt, the Berne Award, and carrying out improvements in the harbour and on the railway of Lourenço Marquez, Portugal to give the same assurances as in 1.
3. Direct loan by Her Majesty's Government on the security and for the purposes mentioned in 2 and on the assurances to be given by Portugal under 1.
4. England to guarantee the Kingdom of Portugal against foreign attack on its Colonial Possessions and spheres of influence, with a reservation to England of the right of pre-emption in the event of the Sovereign of Portugal desiring at any time to part with any of them. Her Majesty's Government to promote a Company to advance money on the security on the revenues and for the purposes named in 2. Portugal to give the assurances specified in 1.
5. Her Majesty's Government to make a loan direct to Portugal for the purposes and on security of the revenues specified in 2, and with the territorial guarantee and right of pre-emption named in 4. Portugal to give the assurances specified in 1.

The Portuguese Government would probably reject 1, as not producing sufficient money, besides being derogatory to Portuguese sovereign rights without compensating advantages, which latter objection would also apply to 2, with the additional disadvantage of their having to settle first with their existing creditors. They might perhaps accept 3, as the money would be at the cheapest rate of interest. They would like the guarantee in 4, but there would be the same financial objection for them as in regard to 2. They would probably gladly accept 5. If the dynasty should fall and disorder ensue, we might, on the plea of securing ourselves against the loss of our money, take any material guarantee that might suit us.

The alternative 5, fully stated, is :—

England to guarantee the Kingdom of Portugal against foreign attack on its colonial possessions and spheres of influence, with a reservation to England of the right of pre-emption in the event of the Sovereign of Portugal desiring at any time to part with any of them. Her Majesty's Government to make direct to Portugal a loan secured on the revenues of all the Portuguese Colonial possessions, inclusive of the railways and the port of Lourenço Marquez. Such loan to be used, under proper safeguards, to pay off the floating debt of Portugal and the Berne Award, and to provide for requisite improvements in the harbour and on the railway of Lourenço Marquez. Portugal to undertake not to alienate in any way by cession, concession, lease or otherwise any part of Delagoa Bay or the approaches to the Transvaal from the sea, whether by railway, tramway, or river communication, and not to confirm or grant without the concurrence of Her Majesty's Government any concessions within a specified radius of Lourenço Marquez.

If we give such a guarantee to the Kingdom of Portugal we should, by an exchange of secret notes, provide that, in the event of hostilities between ourselves and the Transvaal, we may temporarily occupy Lourenço Marquez so as to prevent the supply to the Transvaal of arms and men from abroad, and to secure to ourselves a road into that Republic if other approaches should be closed to us.

F. BERTIE.

No. 66.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 93.) Africa.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, June 14, 1898.

The German Ambassador at this Court called on me to-day and spoke about the Portuguese Colonies in Africa.

He said that he had been informed from Lisbon that M. de Soveral had come here for the purpose of raising money for his Government. I replied I understood that that was the case. He asked me on what conditions M. de Soveral proposed to raise it. I said that I was not informed upon this point; M. de Soveral had, at my suggestion, called upon Mr. Chamberlain on this subject, but that I knew nothing further.

Her Majesty's Government, however, as he was aware, was desirous of maintaining the best relations with Germany, and I would not fail to inform him in due time of any steps that we might take which might concern the rights or legitimate interests of Germany in the Portuguese Colonies.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 101.) Africa. Confidential.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, June 21, 1898.

Count Hatzfeldt asked me to see him to-day⁽¹⁾ with reference to the matters we had discussed on Friday last. He commenced by putting some questions with regard to the view we took of the negotiations which it was believed M. de Soveral had come to London to conduct.

Count Hatzfeldt asked me whether we would join with Germany in a common action in regard to the financial operations which the Government of Portugal desired to carry through.

I informed his Excellency that we considered any financial dealings between us and Portugal a matter which exclusively concerned the two Powers in question, and that, therefore, even if I knew the precise demands or offer of M. de Soveral, which I did not, I should not think that they could form the subject of diplomatic communication between Her Majesty's Government and the German Government.

Our motive for action was to maintain the *status quo* in respect to Portuguese possessions, and to prolong the life of Portugal. If we should fail, and the question of Portuguese African territory passing under new owners should arise, then it would be quite proper and most desirable that full communication should take place between the Governments of Germany and of Great Britain who possessed territory adjoining to the Portuguese possessions. I did not, however, admit that any rights or claims which would then come under consideration would be at all prejudged by designating any special revenues of Portugal as security for a loan.

After much indefinite conversation I asked him, as he had himself introduced the territorial question, to inform us what it was that his Government wanted. His reply, which was wrapped up in somewhat ambiguous terms, was to the effect that he had not as yet any definite instructions on that point, but that he hoped to be able to answer me in a few days.

In the course of this discussion, I took occasion to intimate to Count Hatzfeldt that the Cabinet were fully alive to the importance of the ancient Treaties between Portugal and Great Britain, which had been confirmed by Lord Granville in 1873, and in some degree by Lord Derby in 1876. Without binding ourselves to details which might have become antiquated, we held, as Lord Granville did, that the Treaties contained stipulations which, in substance, were still binding upon Great Britain.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

⁽¹⁾ [This interview is fully reported on the same day by Count Hatzfeldt, *G.P. XIV*, Pt. I, pp. 261-4. He explained in a friendly but emphatic manner that the transfer of the sovereign rights of Portugal over her Colonies to England would produce a very bad impression in Germany, unless she were consulted. On the 22nd June, *G.P. XIV*, Pt. I, pp. 272-6, Herr von Bülow outlined his policy insisting on Germany being consulted, and indicating suspicions of Anglo-Portuguese relations.]

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 72.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 22, 1898.

The Portuguese Minister communicated to me to-day a telegram from his Government stating that the German Emperor had sent to the King an urgent message that had compelled His Majesty to return from the country and receive in audience the German Minister, who attended in uniform. The German Minister had told the King that the Emperor would not continue on amicable terms with Portugal if the negotiations now being carried on by M. de Soveral in London were pursued without due regard to the legitimate interests of Germany in her African Colonies.

M. de Soveral thereupon asked what I thought the Portuguese Government should do. I replied that it depended upon whether their want of money was very urgent or not. I had informed Count Hatzfeldt that, in our opinion, financial negotiations between Portugal and this country, having for their object the raising of a loan by Portugal, and the finding security for that loan for Great Britain were not matters which interested anyone but the two Powers concerned, and that I could not enter into any diplomatic communication with his Excellency in respect to them. But if negotiations should take the form of territorial alienation in any sense, I quite recognised that Great Britain and Germany, being the neighbours of Portuguese Colonies, would rightly and properly communicate with each other in regard to any such proposed alienation. M. de Soveral, in replying, denied that any alienation was in prospect or probable. I told him that I gathered from Count Hatzfeldt that the pledging of any customs revenue for the interest of the debt in his view partook of the nature of an alienation, and indicated an intention to claim the territory in which these customs were levied. I said that I could not in any degree accept such a doctrine; because in the Turkish Empire, in Brazil, and in several other countries, the mortgage of customs had been arranged for the purpose of securing the interest on an external loan without the slightest intention of carrying with it at any time any territorial cession. I added, however, that if the territorial question arose we would ourselves readily communicate with Germany, but that until it arose we could not admit that a financial operation was a matter in which she had any right to intervene.

M. de Soveral asked me what view Her Majesty's Government took of the ancient Treaties between England and Portugal. I informed him that we quite recognised their present validity, allowing for such alterations as the lapse of time and change of circumstances would involve. We took up the same position with regard to them as that assumed by Lord Granville twenty-five years ago.⁽¹⁾

Reverting to the action of the German Minister at Lisbon, M. de Soveral stated that a similar protest had been made by the French Minister at Lisbon to the President of the Council, and by M. de Bülow to the Portuguese Minister at Berlin.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

(¹) [V. enclosure No. 3, Salisbury to MacDonell, the 23rd June, 1898, *infra* No. 69, p. 51-2.]

No. 69.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 70.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir, *Foreign Office, June 23, 1898.*

I transmit herewith, for convenience of reference, a printed copy of the correspondence which passed in 1873 between Lord Granville and Her Majesty's Ministers at Lisbon and Madrid on the question of the relations between Great Britain and Portugal, in view of possible aggression on the latter from Spain.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

Enclosure 1 in No. 69.

Earl Granville to Mr. Layard.

(No. 29.)

Sir, *Foreign Office, February 19, 1873.*

The Spanish Minister called upon me on the 15th instant, and said, in the course of conversation, that he desired to speak to me on a delicate matter.

It was known, he said, that there was a disposition on the part of the Republican party in Spain towards an union with Portugal, and there were some Republicans in Portugal who would be ready to assist in such a project. If it was generally believed in Spain that such a project could be carried out without opposition from Europe, the Spanish Government might not be able to stop some aggressive movement.

He said that he did not put any question to me that required an answer, but was glad to give me an opportunity of saying anything that occurred to me.

I said that the best answer that I could give him was to state that Great Britain had always disclaimed the wish to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries; but there were Treaty engagements between Portugal and Great Britain to defend Portugal against external aggression, and that the Spaniards could not count upon the indifference of England to an external attack upon Portugal.

I believed that to be an answer to his question.

M. Moret replied that he was aware of the Treaty, but that everything depended upon the attitude of England; that if England opposed herself to such a plan no attempt would be made; otherwise it was sure to happen. That was his personal opinion.

I said that I did not object to his repeating to his Government the question that he had put to me and the answer which I had given.

I am, &c.

GRANVILLE.

Enclosure 2 in No. 6.

[Not reproduced.]

Enclosure 3 in No. 69.

*Earl Granville to Sir C. Murray.*Sir, *Foreign Office, February 27, 1873.*

I have received your despatch No. 24 of the 19th instant, reporting the substance of a communication made to you by Senhor Corvo, showing the apprehensions entertained by the Portuguese Government of the effect which the late overthrow of Monarchy in Spain might have on Portugal, and the wish of the Portuguese Govern-

ment to ascertain whether, in the event of the Portuguese nation remaining loyal to its Sovereign and to its present Constitution, it might expect the effective support of Great Britain against open aggression and invasion on the part of Spain.

You will have seen by my despatch No. 15, Confidential, of the 19th instant, that I have warned the Spanish Minister that there were Treaty engagements between Portugal and Great Britain to defend Portugal against external aggression, and that the Spaniards could not count upon the indifference of England to an external attack upon Portugal.

That statement will have enabled you to reassure the Portuguese Government, but in all your language to Senhor Corvo or others you will be careful to disclaim any disposition or intention on the part of Her Majesty's Government to interfere with the internal affairs of Portugal, and you will make it clear that Her Majesty's Government reserve for themselves to judge of the circumstances under which any appeal is made to them by Portugal for succour.

I am, &c.

GRANVILLE.

Enclosures 4 to 6 in No. 69.

[Not reproduced.]

No. 70.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 102.) Africa. Secret.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, June 23, 1898.

The German Ambassador came to see me again to-day on the subject of the Portuguese negotiations. I renewed the question which I had put to his Excellency at the last meeting, and pressed him to tell me precisely what he wanted.

To this enquiry Count Hatzfeldt gave me two alternative replies. The simpler plan was that Great Britain and Germany should make a parallel loan to Portugal, not necessarily of the same amount, and that the two Powers should agree upon the particular customs revenue by which the interests of each loan were to be secured, it being understood on both sides that in selecting places where these revenues were collected, we should be establishing a footing which, in case of certain eventualities, would decide the destiny of the territories in question.

The second proposal which he made to me was of a wider character. It was to the effect that Germany would abandon to us Delagoa Bay and the Mozambique Province up to the Zambezi, on the condition that the Portuguese territories beyond the Zambezi up to the Rovuma and the Shiré should fall to Germany. He also would ask on the western side of Africa for the Colony of Angola. These inchoate rights, of course, were only to come to maturity in case Portugal fell to pieces.

I told his Excellency that it would be necessary for me to enquire and reflect on the subject before giving an answer of any kind. But I could not help observing that his demands were very large, and I much doubted whether they would lead to the conclusion of any engagement. He thereupon replied that I must not tell him later on that we had rejected this proposal on account of the extravagance of his demands, because if we objected to them he was quite ready to consider our objections, and make others in place of those which we rejected. I promised to let him have an answer in a few days.

Before he left the room Count Hatzfeldt informed me that the Republic of Liberia was in great difficulty as to money, and that German subjects were injured by its insolvency. He intimated that some explanations were likely to be demanded of it by the German Government.

I begged his Excellency not to think of repeating, in this instance, the procedure followed at Kiao-chau, because Liberia was a Republic in the foundation of which we had taken much interest, and we should look with the greatest possible aversion upon any proceeding tending to diminish its independence or the area of its territory.

It may be well to note that his Excellency claimed from England a benevolent examination of the propositions he was making, on the ground that in past negotiations Germany had been of great service to this country. When I pressed him to specify these incidents, which my memory did not enable me to recall, he said that Russia and France together were very much disposed to attack us on the subject of the Suez Canal, and had only been prevented by the disapproval of Germany.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 71.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Portugal (Africa).

(No. 77.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 29, 1898.

The Portuguese Minister came to me to-day to speak about the negotiations for a loan. He read me a telegram, from which it appeared that the sum required by Portugal was £8,000,000, of which £2,000,000 were to be spent on improvements at Lourenço Marques and the railway, and were to be secured on the Customs of the Province of Mozambique, which amounted to £300,000 a year. The further sum of £6,000,000 was required to pay off the floating debt and for other financial arrangements—the interest on this amount to be secured on the Customs of Portugal itself. The Portuguese Government were anxious that these arrangements should be made in a manner that would not offend Germany or France.

I intimated that the advantages to us did not appear to be very great, but he observed that this proposal would involve a control on our part over Delagoa Bay and the railway to the Transvaal.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 72.

Memorandum by Mr. Bertie.

F.O. Portugal (Africa) 1359.

(Confidential.)

Foreign Office, June 30, 1898.

On the assumption that Her Majesty's Government are disposed to admit the participation of Germany, but to exclude that of France, in the arrangements for the relief of Portugal from her present embarrassments, I venture to submit the following considerations:—

Germany bases her claim to participation on the ground of her African possessions being contiguous to the Possessions of Portugal. France, however, is also a neighbour of Portugal in Africa, not on the east coast, but on the west coast, viz., near the mouth of the Congo, and on the Guinea Coast, in both of which regions the possessions of the

two countries are contiguous. France also has financial if not political interests in the Transvaal, and has, at the instigation of Germany, made representations at Lisbon in regard to the negotiations between England and Portugal. Is France in such circumstances likely to submit to be set aside if Germany is allowed to participate, and is it probable that Germany can leave her in the lurch? France is not likely to have joined Germany except on an understanding and at a price.

Is it not possible that Russia, seeing that Her Majesty's Government are ready to accept German co-operation, will claim to join in with France? The result might be that we should be squeezed—Portugal willingly assenting—into a financial arrangement which would constitute Delagoa Bay and Railway an international concern under Portuguese sovereignty. This might soon be followed by the assertion by the Transvaal of entire independence of England.

With regard to pre-emptive rights, we have them already on the East coast up to the Zambesi from the South under the Treaty of 1891, and we are bound by the Treaty of 1661 to defend Portugal from attack. If Germany obtain a right of pre-emption southwards from her frontier down to the Zambesi she will whenever the right comes into force encircle with German territory a large portion of the British Central Africa Protectorate. Our interest as defenders of Portugal from foreign aggression is to promote good government and so prolong her life. Germany being under no obligation to defend Portugal, and coveting her possessions, will encourage bad administration and sedition in the hope that those possessions will fall away from Portugal without raising any questions under our ancient treaties with that State.

The security at present offered by the Portuguese Government is manifestly inadequate; but rather than specially earmark the security, would it not be better for our reversionary interests to take a general charge on the unhypothecated revenues of all the Possessions of Portugal outside the country itself with a right of pre-emption but without a claim to her subsequent charges on the revenues, provided we have priority over them?

If for political reasons it is necessary to come to terms with Germany we might have with her an exchange of secret notes undertaking that whenever, if ever, the break-up of Portugal from internal causes should come about Germany shall receive certain specified portions of the spoil.

F. B.

No. 73.

Sir H. MacDonell to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1466.
Tel. (No. 17.) Africa. Confidential.

Lisbon, D. July 6, 1898, 7.30 P.M.

R. July 7, 1898, 8 A.M.

My tel. No. 16 of 22nd ult[imo].

The German Min[iste]r continues urging the Portuguese Gov[ernmen]t not to come to a financial understanding with H[er] M[ajesty's] Gov[ernmen]t without the full knowledge and consent of Imperial Gov[ernmen]t. He strongly advocates an Anglo-German combination without the participation of France on the ground that the latter is a determined opponent here of an English arrangement. Portuguese Min[iste]r for Foreign Affairs says that Portuguese Gov[ernmen]t adhere to but cannot go beyond last combination suggested by Y[our] L[ordship].

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.
(No. 122.) Africa. Confidential.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 9, 1898.

Count Hatzfeldt asked to see me this afternoon with a view of discussing Portuguese proposals.⁽¹⁾ I told him that I had not received from M. de Soveral the details which were necessary before a conclusion could be arrived at.

He urged an immediate Agreement between England and Germany, because France was doing her best to make mischief between them. He told me of a story which he had received from a French diplomatic source, to the effect that England and Portugal had come to an Agreement which would place the coast of Portugal and the harbours of Portugal under English control. I, of course, replied that there was not a word of truth in the story, but that I could not, for fear of French mischief-making, consent to an Agreement which would have the effect of wounding the feelings of the Portuguese, and giving them the impression that we were watching for the downfall of Portugal.

He protested very earnestly that Germany entertained no such views, but, on the contrary, was very anxious to maintain Portugal. He merely wished that if a loan was made, it should be partially German and partially British; that the customs duties, which each Power should take as its security, should indicate the territorial claims of that Power if Portugal should go to pieces.

As regards this division of territorial prospective claims, he wished for the territory between the Zambezi and the German territory, and as far west as the Shiré.

This, I told him, would include Blantyre, which was British territory.

He was aware of that, but still insisted on the proposal. I told him that any cession of any British territory in that region was absolutely out of the question.

As to Angola, he wanted the whole of it. I said that we could not accept such an idea; the pre-emptive claim would have to be divided.

Walfisch Bay and the extraterritoriality of Zanzibar were mentioned in the course of conversation, but he did not appear to care much about the one or to hold out much hope of conceding the other. Some arrangement for the transfer of Togo was spoken of, but he rejected the idea with scorn, and would not discuss the question at all. He wanted our influence to obtain from the Portuguese half of the Island of Timor.

The general effect left on my mind was that for some reason or other the mind of the Emperor was bent on an Agreement of *some kind* with Great Britain; but that, nevertheless, he was taking the opportunity to make larger demands than he was prepared to press.

I told Count Hatzfeldt I would place the negotiations before my colleagues on Tuesday. The difficulty will be a form of note which shall not look like cutting up Portugal while still alive.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

(¹) [Lord Salisbury had an important conversation on the 6th July with Count Hatzfeldt. See *G.P.* XIV, Pt. I, 281-4. There is no report of it in the Foreign Office archives.]

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 124.) Africa.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 13, 1898.

The German Ambassador came this afternoon to discuss the question of the proposed Portuguese Loan and the Colonial question attached to it.

I told His Excellency that I had not yet had any proposal from M. de Soveral, and, therefore, could say nothing about the loan, but that Her Majesty's Government were prepared to come to an Agreement with that of Germany somewhat on these lines :—

On our side, it would be stipulated that if Portugal decided on the conclusion of a loan to abandon to us the control of the Transvaal Railway and of the port of Lourenço Marques, Germany would offer no opposition.

That if Great Britain should determine to make a loan to Portugal, Germany would not oppose her in securing the interest of that loan on the proceeds of the custom-houses at Mozambique, south of the Zambezi, and the proceeds of the custom-houses of the Province of Angola, north of the town of Egitto.

On the other side, if Germany should decide to lend money to Portugal, Great Britain would not object to her securing the interest on the revenues of the custom-houses of Mozambique, north of the Zambezi, as far as the River Shiré, and the custom-houses of the province of Angola from the town of Egitto southwards. It was to be a condition on both sides that while we were most sincerely anxious to uphold the Kingdom of Portugal and to prevent any diminution of its African territory, yet if, by any mischance, the districts which had been mentioned should be abandoned or surrendered by Portugal, then in each case the Power which is contemplated in this instrument as having a right to secure a loan on the custom-houses of the Portuguese Colonies should, in this contingency, have a pre-emptive right over the territory of the province to which they belonged.

Count Hatzfeldt professed himself very ill-satisfied with these proposals, and said he would refer them to his Government. He dwelt much on the necessity of speed and the danger that would accrue to the interests of Great Britain and Europe if we did not come to an agreement on this occasion, and on his fear that the terms offered were not sufficient to secure that end.

He asked if I had any proposal to make about Walfisch Bay. I said that I had not consulted my colleagues on that subject: he was well aware that we could not deal with it without the concurrence of the Cape Government, but I would consider any proposals in connection with it that he might present to me.

His Excellency was also anxious that we should give our good offices to enable Germany to take the Portuguese half of the Island of Timor.

I thereupon took the opportunity of mentioning that the surrender by Germany of extritoriality in Zanzibar and Pemba and the adjustment of our territorial dispute as to the neutral zone in West Africa were matters on which, if we came to any general conclusion, it might be also desirable to agree.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 83.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 13, 1898.

The Portuguese Minister called on me late this afternoon and informed me that, in view of all the difficulties with which the question of a loan was surrounded, his Government had decided in favour of leaving matters *in statu quo*. This decision, as he explained to me, involved the abandonment of all idea of a loan from the British or any other Government, and also of any notion of altering the attitude of Great Britain or of Portugal towards any portion of the Portuguese possessions in Africa.

We discussed for a short time the financial position of Portugal, which did not seem to be satisfactory. I warned M. de Soveral that a proposal for a control after the fashion of Greece was very likely to come from some of the other Powers, but that it was one which would meet with strong resistance on our part.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 123A.) Africa.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 19, 1898.

The German Ambassador called on me this morning to discuss further the question of a loan to Portugal and the future of the Portuguese Colonies. His Excellency made to me in conversation certain proposals, of which, at the end of the interview, he dictated the following summary :—

ARTICLE I.

L'Allemagne et l'Angleterre s'engagent à ne procurer ni garantir un emprunt au Portugal autrement qu'en commun ou simultanément et contre l'engagement des revenus des Douanes d'Angola, du Mozambique, et de la partie Portugaise de Timor. Aussitôt que cet emprunt sera convenu avec le Portugal, l'Administration des Douanes de la Province de Mozambique, au sud du Zambèze, et de la Province d'Angola, au nord d'Egito, reviendra à l'Angleterre, et l'Administration des Douanes de la Province de Mozambique, au nord du Zambèze, de la Province d'Angola, au sud d'Egito, et de la partie Portugaise de Timor, reviendra à l'Allemagne.

ARTICLE II.

En même temps, l'Allemagne s'engage pour le cas où le contrôle du Chemin de fer au Transvaal et du port de Lourenço Marques serait abandonné après la conclusion de l'emprunt par le Portugal à l'Angleterre à ne pas s'y opposer. Par contre, l'Angleterre s'engage à céder à l'Allemagne, aussitôt l'emprunt conclu, le territoire de Walfisch Bay avec les îlots situés devant la côte du Protectorat Allemand dans le sud-ouest de l'Afrique et celui de Blantyre. Les droits privés des sujets Allemands à Delagoa Bay tels qu'ils résultent de la concession de Catembé seront assurés.

ARTICLE III.

Pour le cas où le Portugal renoncerait au Mozambique, à l'Angola, et à la partie Portugaise de Timor, ou qu'il perdrait ces territoires, l'Allemagne et l'Angleterre s'engagent à ne pas s'opposer à ce que les parties de ces territoires Portugais dans lesquelles le contrôle de l'Administration des Douanes a été stipulé en faveur de l'Allemagne ou de l'Angleterre par l'Article II reviennent à chacune des deux Puissances.

I promised that Her Majesty's Government would carefully consider these proposals; but I reserved my reply till after they had been submitted to the Cabinet.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 78.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 124A.) Africa.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 20, 1898.

I informed the German Ambassador this afternoon that the Cabinet had given full consideration to the proposals which his Excellency made to me yesterday with respect to the Portuguese Colonies. The cession of Blantyre or of any British territory between the north of Mozambique and the Shiré was entirely out of the question. I had prepared him for the certainty of this reply. Any concession of the rights over Samoa or over Tonga, which he had mentioned in conversation as a possible substitute for Blantyre, was rendered impossible by the strong objections which the Australian Colonies would raise to such a transfer. Walfisch Bay was a possession to which the Cape Colony attached very great importance. It could not be alienated, in the judgment of Her Majesty's Government, except in return for a very considerable concession on the part of Germany. The proposed engagement with regard to Delagoa Bay and the Transvaal Railway was not, in their opinion, an adequate equivalent. All that would, indeed, be given to us by his Excellency's proposals in that respect would amount to no more than this, that if Portugal surrendered to us the port and the railway Germany would not object. But we already had an engagement from Portugal, that if she surrendered either one or the other the pre-emptive right to it should be secured to Great Britain.

Any objection that Germany might take was not one that would hold good in international law, and was, therefore, not one that we should feel it necessary to regard. But if any validity attached to a possible German objection to this surrender, an equal value must be assigned to the objections of France and of the Transvaal, and against these the engagements offered by Germany would afford no protection whatever. This concession, therefore, with regard to Delagoa Bay and the Transvaal Railway, would not, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, be an equivalent for Walfisch Bay. In colonial opinion, so far as it was represented by the Colonial Office, nothing less than such an equivalent as the cession of Togoland would be regarded as an adequate counterweight to the renunciation of our ownership of Walfisch Bay.

Count Hatzfeldt expressed great regret at this decision on our part, which he feared might bring the negotiation to an end. In the expression of this feeling he was actuated not only by considerations connected with the future of South Africa and the distribution of territory in that region under contingencies which were by no

means improbable; he was still more impressed with the evil that would result to the two nations if this opportunity of establishing a hearty accord between them should be lost. In the position occupied by Germany she could not stand alone; if she could find no resource in the friendship of Great Britain she must turn to Russia.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 79.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 130.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, July 27, 1898.

The German Ambassador called on me and renewed the conversation with respect to the fiscal arrangements which would have to be made for loans, if any were made to Portugal, and the territorial arrangements which would follow in case her financial obligations were not observed. The last time his proposal was that the customs revenue of the Province of Mozambique south of Zambezi, including the Transvaal Railway and Delagoa Bay, should be the security for the English part of the loan on the east; that those of that portion of Angola which intervened between Egito on the 12th parallel and the River Lelundo, flowing into the sea on the 7th parallel of south latitude, should be the security of the English loan on the west; while Northern Mozambique and all the Portuguese territory north of the Zambezi on the east, together with the residue of Angola, being the part of the province south of Egito, and the part of the province lying at the mouth of the Congo River north of the River Lelundo, should be the security for the German portion of the loan on the west. He repeated the earnest desire of the German Government, which he knew we shared, that the integrity and permanence of Portugal should be assured; but if any calamity were to happen which should force Portugal to part with the territories that have been mentioned, the two Powers would bind themselves not to recognise any alienation of any of them to any other Power except the one to whom, under this instrument, the revenues that were to be a security should be paid.

Of course, it would be necessary that some species of surveillance should be exercised over the receipt of the revenues from which the security was to come, and that if Portugal made default a control over those revenues would have to be exerted.

This proposal differed from that which he laid before me last week in this respect, that Germany ceased to ask for Walfisch Bay or for Blantyre, but had added to her demands the strip of the land south of the Congo on the 7th parallel south, and the Portuguese territory lying on the east coast on the north bank of the Zambezi, between Zumbo and Senna.

I reserved my opinion entirely with respect to these propositions until I had had an opportunity of examining them more closely and consulting with my colleagues; but I warned him that the demand of the territory lying to the north of the Zambezi between Zumbo and Senna related to territory that we should not like to see in German hands, as it went so far to surround that which belonged to Great Britain.

Samoa and Timur were not mentioned on one side, nor the ex-territoriality of Zanzibar upon the other.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 131.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 3, 1898.

The German Ambassador asked me to-day what view we took of the territorial distribution which he had suggested should take place, under certain well-defined contingencies, in connection with the Portuguese Colonies in Africa. I replied that it was quite impossible that we could ever consent to allow the north bank of the Zambezi, above its junction with the Shiré, to pass into the hands of Germany.

His Excellency answered by asking what compensation we had to offer him for refusing the suggested cession. I demurred, as I had done before, to the word "compensation," and said I did not see how any arrangement could be made for satisfying Germany in respect of these territories unless it were done by expanding to some extent the portion of Angola that was destined, in the event of its being given up by Portugal, for her. Count Hatzfeldt looked at the map and proposed that the northern portion of Angola at the mouth of the Congo, which it had been suggested should be subjected to German pre-emption as far south as the River Lelundo, should now be extended as far south as the town of Ambriz, lying on the 8th parallel of south latitude.

This, he pointed out to me, would still assign St. Paul de Loanda to Great Britain, thereby giving to us the most important position on the coast.

I replied that it would be necessary in such a case, if we admitted that Germany should hold so important a position at the mouth of the Congo, that a space should be assigned to us, as had been assigned at Chinde on the Zambezi, for warehousing and other similar purposes, and that mutual international equality of tariff should, in these districts, be agreed upon.

His Excellency said he was not in a position to make these proposals definitively until he had been duly authorised; and I, on my part, reserved my definitive opinion until I had consulted my colleagues: but I said that I thought these changes of territorial ownership were wholly contingent on their abandonment by Portugal—a contingency which we most earnestly deprecated. In any case, a great deal of careful drafting would be necessary in order to prevent such stipulations from wounding the feelings or infringing the rights of Portugal.

He urged two or three small modifications, to which I offered no objection, subject to the condition that they were accepted by Portugal.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

Memorandum by Mr. Bertie.

F.O. Portugal (Africa) 1359.

Foreign Office, August 10, 1898.⁽¹⁾

Germany is pressing us to come to an immediate arrangement with her about Portugal in Southern Africa—east and west—and she makes the usual more or less covert threats that if we do not do so she will join Russia or France or both of them to our detriment all the world over.

The advantages to be secured to Germany by our co-operation are obvious, but what are we to obtain that we could not get without her assistance or even in spite of her opposition?

(¹) [Seen by Mr. Balfour, the 11th August.]

I submit the following considerations in case they should not all have already occurred to Her Majesty's Government.

The projected agreement is based upon the hypothesis that the Portuguese Government will be willing to accept the co-operation of Germany with England in providing money for Portugal, she giving in return reversionary rights over Portuguese territories to Germany and England.

England has already such reversionary rights over what is especially valuable to her, and it is proposed to extend them slightly on the east side of Africa and to create for Germany large contingent rights on that coast, and to establish on the west side of South Africa extensive rights for Germany and lesser ones for England.

There are no indications that the co-operation of Germany with England would be acceptable to Portugal. On the contrary, she is well aware of the territorial and financial designs of Germany, and it will only be very great pressure and dire financial necessity that will bring her to submit to the intervention of Germany in her affairs. M. de Soveral is strongly opposed to it, and urges that we should not tie our hands with Germany as if we can postpone the question till the autumn—when we may be less occupied elsewhere—there is good prospect of a change of government at Lisbon and a satisfactory settlement between England and Portugal.

Unless the proposed agreement with Germany provides for contingencies likely to arise in other parts of the world besides southern Africa it will not gain for us her support in Europe, the East, the Far East or the Pacific. It will not even satisfy her pretensions in Africa. She will still ask for the line of the Volta to the sea and will refuse to concede to us Salaga in the neutral zone. She will still hanker after Liberia and may even advance claims in Gando. She will also continue to maintain her extraterritorial rights in Zanzibar. Moreover, there is good reason to believe that she is actually negotiating with the United States in regard to Samoa and the Philippines.

Germany is not likely to risk a quarrel or even an estrangement with Russia for our benefit unless we guarantee her against France and Russia. This would involve a permanent quarrel between England and France.

If Germany advances money to Portugal, is she to join us in guaranteeing Portugal against aggression? If she does so, she may claim to use Portuguese ports in time of war, both those of the Portuguese coast and those beyond the seas, including Delagoa Bay. If she is not to join our guarantee, but advances money, she will always be on the look-out for an opportunity to take possession of her security. This would raise a question of our treaty obligations and cause the quarrel which we are seeking to avoid.

As to the financial part of the arrangement, are we to assist in providing funds for a settlement of the claims of the foreign bondholders in which the Darmstadt Bank (in which the German Emperor holds shares) is greatly interested?

What is to be the reward to France for joining the German protest at Lisbon against an arrangement with England? Is she only to get satisfaction for her bondholders or is she to have from Germany the reversion of the territory at the mouth of the Congo?

If we sign this agreement with Germany shall we be free without her concurrence to provide funds for the Berne Award and works on the Delagoa Bay harbour and railway supposing that Portugal were willing to confine an arrangement with us to such purposes only, and that the security of the railway and port were found sufficient?

The several points which I have enumerated seem to require consideration, and I venture to submit them in case any of them may have escaped notice.

F. BERTIE.

Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 134.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 11, 1898.

The German Ambassador called on me to-day,⁽¹⁾ by appointment, in order further to discuss the negotiations commenced by Lord Salisbury in connection with the proposed loan on the security of the Portuguese possessions in Africa. His Excellency remarked that Germany was getting very little and giving a great deal, and that the proposed arrangement would be very severely criticised by his countrymen.

I replied that my own impression was quite different, but as the general outlines of the arrangement had been already fixed, this was not a point which need be further argued.

I stated with great emphasis, and more than once, that my chief anxiety was to spare the susceptibilities of Portugal. It was almost impossible to enter into an agreement such as that now contemplated without suggesting the idea that the Contracting Parties desired the eventual dismemberment of Portugal's Colonial Empire. So far as Her Majesty's Government were concerned, however, this was the direct opposite of the truth. It was our earnest wish to maintain the integrity of Portugal, and it was only in the event of our being unable to attain this result that ulterior eventualities had to be provided against. Count Hatzfeldt assured me that his Government were not less anxious than our own to maintain the *status quo* in South Africa.

We then discussed the limits of that northern portion of Angola which was to form part of the security of the German loan. Lord Salisbury had agreed to include in the German sphere the coast from the mouth of the Congo to Ambriz with its Hinterland, and to deflect the south frontier of this region sufficiently far south of the 8th parallel to enable access to be obtained to the northern portion of Lunda.

I suggested that this southern frontier might run from Ambriz to the intersection of the 8th parallel of latitude with the 16th line of longitude, and might then go eastward along the 9th parallel of latitude as far as the frontier of the Congo Free State.

A good many subsidiary questions were then discussed, and his Excellency left with me, unofficially, a Memorandum, of which I enclose a copy, embodying his suggestions for a Treaty between the two countries. I promised to consider it, and to communicate my views as soon as possible.

His Excellency informed me that Lord Salisbury had agreed to regard Timor as part of the security for the proposed German loan, which somewhat surprised me.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

⁽¹⁾ [There is no report in the Foreign Office archives of Lord Salisbury's interview with Count Hatzfeldt of the 8th August, *G.P.* XIV, Pt. I, pp. 315-6), just before he went abroad and handed over the Foreign Office to Mr. Balfour.]

Enclosure in No. 82.

Memorandum.

[Communicated unofficially by Count Hatzfeldt, August 11, 1898.]

L'Allemagne et l'Angleterre s'engagent à ne procurer ni garantir un emprunt au Portugal autrement qu'en commun ou simultanément et contre l'engagement des revenus des douanes d'Angola, de Mozambique, et de la partie Portugaise de Timor.

Cet emprunt, proposé au Portugal par les deux Gouvernements, sera de 8,000,000l., dont l'Angleterre fournira , et l'Allemagne

2. Des douanes susmentionnées, celles de la Province de Mozambique au sud du Zambèze et de la Province d'Angola au nord d'Egito jusqu'à la ligne allant de Catumbo par Mona Kissengu à la frontière du Congo Belge, seront affectées à l'emprunt Anglais ou à la partie de l'emprunt fourni par l'Angleterre; les douanes de la Province de Mozambique au nord du Zambèze, de la Province d'Angola au sud d'Egito et au nord de la ligne allant de Catumbo par Mona Kissengu à la frontière du Congo Belge et celles de la partie Portugaise de Timor seront affectées à l'engagement Allemand ou à la partie de l'engagement fourni par l'Allemagne.

En ce qui concerne la ligne allant de Catumbo par Mona Kissengu à la frontière du Congo Belge, il est entendu, vu le manque de prévision des cartes géographiques à ce sujet, qu'au sud de la frontière du Congo Belge, en tant qu'elle suit le 8° degré de latitude, cette ligne devra être tracée de manière à rester éloignée d'au moins 100 lieues (milles) de la frontière du Congo Belge susmentionnée. Pour le cas où la configuration montagneuse du pays entre ces deux lignes offrirait des difficultés sérieuses à des communications régulières par cette voie, l'Angleterre accordera éventuellement un droit de passage à l'Allemagne au sud de la ligne allant de Catumbo par Mona Kissengu à la frontière du Congo Belge.

3. L'Allemagne et l'Angleterre auront le droit, après la conclusion de l'emprunt, d'envoyer des Délégués afin de surveiller sur place l'administration des douanes spécialement affectées à chacun des deux pays.

Dans le cas où les intérêts et l'amortissement de l'emprunt conclu en commun ou de l'un des emprunts conclus simultanément ne seraient pas payés exactement aux termes convenus par le Portugal, l'administration des douanes spécialement affectées à l'Allemagne et l'Angleterre leur sera remise simultanément.

4. En cas de nouveaux embarras financiers du Gouvernement Portugais après la conclusion de l'emprunt, et s'il s'adressait à l'un des deux Gouvernements pour obtenir directement ou par son entremise une assistance pécuniaire, l'Allemagne et l'Angleterre se réservent d'examiner la question en commun, et d'aviser aux meilleurs moyens de la résoudre dans l'intérêt du Portugal et des deux autres Parties Contractantes.

5. Si le Gouvernement Portugais se décide, après la conclusion de l'emprunt, à céder à l'Angleterre le contrôle du port de Lourenço Marques et du chemin de fer au Transvaal, l'Allemagne ne s'y opposera pas; mais il est bien entendu que cette cession ne pourra être effectuée que quand l'Allemagne recevra de son côté l'administration des douanes qui lui sont spécialement affectées par le présent arrangement.

Les droits privés de sujets Allemands à Delagoa Bay, tels qu'ils résultent de la concession de Catumbo, seront assurés en tout cas.

6. Pour le cas où le Portugal renoncerait à ses droits de souveraineté sur le Mozambique, la Province d'Angola, et la partie Portugaise de Timor, ou qu'il perdrait ces territoires d'une autre manière, il est expressément entendu que les parties de ces provinces Portugaises dans lesquelles le contrôle de l'administration des douanes a été stipulé en faveur de l'Allemagne et de l'Angleterre reviendront en toute propriété et simultanément à chacune des deux Puissances.

No. 83.

Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 137.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 18, 1898.

The German Ambassador came to see me by appointment this afternoon to discuss the proposed Agreement between Great Britain and Germany in connection with a loan to Portugal.

I began by saying that, after our last interview, I had enquired from Lord Salisbury as to his recollection of what had passed between him and his Excellency with respect to the proposal to include Timor in the German security. Lord Salisbury had replied that he had made no definite arrangement about Timor, that it seemed to lie outside questions connected with Africa, but that we had no objection to its being so included if Portugal agreed.

Count Hatzfeldt expressed great surprise and disappointment at this answer. He stated that he had read a Memorandum to Lord Salisbury, in which Timor was specifically mentioned, and that Lord Salisbury had raised no objection. All his proposals with regard to the distribution of the security were based on this understanding, and he had telegraphed to that effect to his Government, by whom the point was regarded as of the utmost importance. His Excellency thought all negotiations would be broken off if we changed our minds on the subject, and a feeling of great bitterness would be aroused in Germany.

I answered that, after Lord Salisbury's telegram to me, I could give his Excellency no definite reply without further reference to the Prime Minister, but I promised an answer by Tuesday next, the 23rd, and suggested that we should discuss the other points in the Agreement.

I then handed to his Excellency unofficially two draft Declarations, which I thought would carry out the views of the two Governments. I enclose copies of these documents.

Beyond an objection raised by Count Hatzfeldt to the Chinde arrangement proposed in Article 3 of (B), the object of which, he thought, might be much better met by a stipulation in favour of equal commercial rights to the subjects of both nations, he made no important comment on my drafts, but took them away for further consideration.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

Enclosure 1 in No. 83.

Declaration (A).

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

In view of the possibility that Portugal may require financial assistance from some foreign Power or Powers, and in order to obviate the international complications which such a condition of things may produce, and to preserve her integrity and independence, the Undersigned, duly authorised by the Governments of Great Britain and Germany, have agreed as follows :—

1. Whenever either the British or the German Government is of opinion that it is expedient to accede to a request for an advance of money to Portugal on the security of the Customs revenues of Mozambique or Angola, it shall communicate the fact to the other Government, and the other Government shall have the right to advance a portion of the total sum required.

In the event of the other Government signifying its intention to exercise this right, the two loans shall be issued as near as possible simultaneously, and (?two-thirds) of the total sum shall be advanced by Great Britain, and (?one-third) by Germany.

2. Of the Customs revenues, referred to in Article 1, those of the Province of Mozambique, south of the Zambezi, and of the part of that Province lying west and north of the confluence of the River Shiré with the Zambezi; and of the Province of Angola, north of Egito to the line passing from Ambriz to the intersection of the 8th parallel of south latitude with the 16th degree of longitude east of Greenwich, thence descending that degree to the 9th parallel of latitude, and following that parallel eastwards as far as the frontier of the Congo Free State, will be assigned to the English loan, or to that part of the loan furnished by England; the Customs of

the Province of Mozambique north of the Zambezi, with the exception of the part lying west and north of the confluence of the River Shiré with the Zambezi, and those of the Province of Angola south of Egito and north of the line from Ambriz, as above defined, will be assigned to the German loan, or to that part of the loan furnished by Germany.

3. Any Delegates sent by England and Germany to take note of the collection of the revenues which are the security for their respective loans shall have only rights of inspection but no rights of administration, interference, or control, so long as there is no default in the payment of interest or sinking fund.

4. In case of default in the payment of the interest or sinking fund of either loan, the administration of the various custom-houses specially hypothecated in the two provinces shall be handed over by Portugal; those hypothecated as security for the German loan to Germany, those hypothecated as security for the British loan to Great Britain.

5. No private right of either British or German subjects shall be affected by this agreement, and in particular the so-called Katembe Concession, shall be safeguarded, it being understood that this Concession conveys purely private rights, and carries with it no territorial or administrative jurisdiction.

Enclosure 2 in No. 83.

Declaration (B).

Whereas, notwithstanding the provisions of the preceding Declaration of this day's date, or of any other Arrangement already in force or which may hereafter be made between Portugal and either of the Contracting Parties, it may not be found possible to maintain the integrity of the African possessions of Portugal south of the Equator, the Undersigned, on behalf of their respective Governments, have further agreed as follows :—

1. Great Britain and Germany agree jointly to oppose the intervention of any third Power in the Provinces of Angola and Mozambique, either by way of loan to Portugal on the security of the revenues of those provinces, or by way of acquisition of territory, by grant, cession, purchase, lease, or otherwise.

2. In case Portugal renounces her sovereign rights over Mozambique and Angola, or loses these territories in any other manner, it is understood that Great Britain will abstain from advancing any claim of whatsoever kind to the possession, occupation, control, or exercise of political influence of or over those portions of the Portuguese provinces in which the customs revenues have been hypothecated to Germany, and that Germany will in like manner abstain from advancing any claim of whatsoever kind to the possession, occupation, control, or exercise of political influence, in or over those portions of those Portuguese provinces in which the customs revenues have been hypothecated to England.

3. In the event of the Portuguese territory adjoining the River Congo passing under the control of Germany, the Imperial German Government will grant to Great Britain, on lease, two pieces of ground on that river : one at a suitable spot at the mouth, and the other higher up, on terms similar to those agreed upon in regard to the Niger between Great Britain and France under the Convention of 14th June, 1898.

4. Nothing in this Declaration shall be interpreted as derogating from the stipulations of existing Treaties between Great Britain and Portugal.

Mr. Balfour to Mr. Thornton.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.
(No. 90.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 18, 1898.

The Portuguese Minister came to see me this afternoon, and after some unimportant preliminaries brought round the conversation to the reports which had reached him of Count Hatzfeldt's frequent visits to the Foreign Office, which he feared boded no good to Portugal. I said I was glad he had raised the subject, on which I desired to be perfectly frank with him, and to speak without diplomatic reserve. He was already aware from conversations with Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain that the Government thought it would be desirable to introduce Germany into any arrangement we might make for lending money to Portugal on the security of her African possessions.

M. de Soveral replied that he had never understood that Germany was, in the first instance, to be a party to negotiations in which the other two nations had been, or might be, engaged. He had supposed that the plan contemplated was for Great Britain to make an arrangement direct with Portugal, and then to negotiate separately with Germany as to the share of the loan to be advanced by that country, and the security to be assigned to her for its repayment. I pointed out to him that, in view of the very difficult questions raised by these international borrowings, it would be to the interest of everybody that an arrangement should, if possible, be come to with Germany without delay, even though we had not at the present moment before us any application from Portugal for pecuniary assistance. I informed him that in any arrangement with Germany the sovereign rights of Portugal would be most carefully safeguarded, and that no cession of territory would be asked of her. I further pointed out to him that, so far as I could see, if Portugal wanted money beyond what she could obtain in the open market, there seemed to be open to her only three alternatives within the range of practical politics :

The first was to borrow from Great Britain alone, as he had apparently desired; the second was to borrow from Great Britain and Germany together, according to the proposal which I had just sketched out to him; and the third was to endeavour to borrow from other Powers, which could probably only be done at the cost of an international control, to which we should have the strongest objection, and which would be disastrous to the independence of his country. If for any reason therefore the first of these courses seemed to us inexpedient, the second was the one most advantageous to Portugal. I told him frankly, therefore, that though I could not say whether our negotiations with Germany would be successful, I should endeavour to make them so.

I did not gather from M. de Soveral that he really dissented from these views, and he seemed to think they might be made not unacceptable to his Government. I advised him strongly, however, in the meantime to say nothing, promising to communicate with him again, if, and when, anything was finally arranged with Germany.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 139.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 19, 1898.

The German Ambassador came to the Foreign Office this evening and saw Mr. Bertie in order to communicate, for my information, a message from the German Government.

Count Hatzfeldt said that he had been instructed to say that any arrangement regarding Portugal which did not include the Portuguese portion of the Island of Timor in the security to be assigned to Germany for her share of the loan to Portugal would not be acceptable to the German Government. His Excellency went on to say that no objection had been made by Lord Salisbury to its inclusion when he had named it in the security to be taken, and the German Government considered that the negotiations could only be continued on the supposition that the arrangement acquiesced in would hold good. The German Government further observed, with reference to some remarks made by me as to communications to Her Majesty's Government from the Government of Germany being generally of a not very agreeable character, that they were rather astonished at such remarks at the present moment, inasmuch as they looked upon the proposed arrangement regarding Portugal as the inauguration of a common colonial policy by Germany and England, and as an arrangement by which the German Government left to England the whole of South Africa, and they considered that it would be the starting-point for such a common colonial policy.

The German Government say. Count Hatzfeldt continued, that their demands are the minimum for their abandonment of the Boers and the Transvaal; that without the compensation asked for they could not justify themselves to the German public; and that failing such compensation they would be obliged to seek other means of settling the question which would give a greater extension to the matters at issue. His Excellency intimated that other means naturally meant other Powers.

Mr. Bertie observed to Count Hatzfeldt that in the earlier phases of the negotiations Timor had been mentioned and so had Samoa, Walfisch Bay, Blantyre, and Zanzibar; but they seem to have dropped out of the discussions, for in the record of one of the later conversations which Lord Salisbury had had with his Excellency his Lordship had stated that Samoa and Timor were not mentioned on one side nor Zanzibar on the other.

Count Hatzfeldt said that it was quite possible that Timor had not been mentioned in every conversation, but he had, in his last interview with Lord Salisbury, read out a paper which included the Portuguese portion of the island in the German security. Lord Salisbury had made no objection, and his Excellency had consequently so informed the German Government. As to Zanzibar, what was it that Her Majesty's Government wanted? and when Mr. Bertie explained that it was the withdrawal of German extraterritorial jurisdiction, Count Hatzfeldt replied—then why did not the British Government make proposals about it?

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 140.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 20, 1898.

The German Ambassador called to-day to continue the discussion with reference to the question of a Portuguese loan.

His Excellency repeated in substance what he had said on previous occasions to me and Mr. Bertie on the subject of Timor, and it was finally agreed between us that no objection would be raised by Great Britain to that island being included in the security for the German loan if some concession were made by Germany in respect to extritoriality in Zanzibar. His Excellency thought that his Government could be induced to promise that this should be abandoned if and when the control of the hypothecated customs fell to the two countries.

His Excellency then expressed a wish that Declaration (A) should contain a statement to the effect that the two Governments should consult as to the terms of the loans before exercising their right to advance them, and I inserted an amendment in Article I which seemed to meet his views. I said that a clause should also be introduced restricting the interest to be asked from Portugal to a reasonable rate, as this would do much, I thought, to conciliate Portuguese opinion; and I further suggested that provision should be made for the transit of British goods under bond through the German strip of territory to the north of Angola. His Excellency did not object to either of these proposals, and begged me to draft clauses for carrying them into effect, which he undertook to transmit to his Government for their consideration.

His Excellency commented very earnestly on some observations I had casually let drop on a previous occasion respecting the general attitude of Germany towards this country, and her apparent indisposition to work cordially with us even when our interests appeared to be identical, as in China. He assured me in the strongest language that I was mistaken, and that his Government was not only animated by the friendliest feelings towards Great Britain, but was prepared to regard this agreement about South Africa as a new departure of the happiest augury for the future relations of the two Empires.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

Sir F. Lascelles to Mr. Balfour.⁽¹⁾

Homburg, August 22, 1898.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

Tel. (No. 4.) Africa.

D. 12.30 P.M.

R. 3.20 P.M.

I had a long conversation yesterday with the Emperor, whom I met at Empress Frederick's. He used language similar to that held [? by the] acting Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to Gough as reported in his secret telegram of 19th instant [? 20th instant]. I said I was at a disadvantage in discussing the question as I was not yet acquainted with the details of your conversation with Count Hatzfeldt, but I observed that Timor was not an English possession, and that there was a general

⁽¹⁾ [The Emperor's detailed report (the 22nd August) of this conversation, to which he attributed more importance than Sir Frank Lascelles, is printed in *G.P.* XIV, 333-8. Lascelles' despatch of the 23rd August is printed below, No. 122, pp. 100-1. See also Nos. 123-5, pp. 101-5.]

impression in England that Germany was putting forward exorbitant claims. I had, however, perceived during my recent visit to England that there was a sincere and widespread desire for a good understanding between the two countries.

The Emperor replied that he had spared no efforts to bring about such an understanding, but what was the result? The demands of Germany were in no way exorbitant. She was only picking up the bits which England had left, and in spite of the friendly assurances he had received, the demands of Germany were met by His Majesty's Government either by a curt refusal or by an absolute want of consideration for the interests of Germany. He was not yet in possession of the latest details, but he feared that fresh difficulties had arisen with regard to the negotiations for the Portuguese Loan, and if they should break down he should have to reconsider his policy. Colonial expansion had become a necessity for Germany. He would infinitely prefer to obtain what he wanted by a friendly arrangement with England, but if this were not possible he would have to seek assistance elsewhere and to place himself under obligations to other Powers, as indeed had been the case with regard to coaling stations in China for which he had obtained the consent of Russia after many fruitless attempts to obtain the consent of England. His willingness to agree to the acquisition of Delagoa Bay by England in spite of the strong feeling in Germany on the subject was entitled to some return, and the demands he had put forward were not exorbitant, and, on my mentioning Blantyre, he said he would be prepared to consider whether he might not accept compensation for it elsewhere not necessarily in Africa.

His Imperial Majesty's manner was gracious, pleasant, amiable, as always, but he was evidently annoyed at the prospect of the negotiations breaking down, and strongly expressed the feeling that he had been treated with scant consideration, which he would have most strongly resented on the part of any other Power, and to which he, as German Emperor, could not submit much longer even from England.

No. 88.

Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 141.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 22, 1898.

The German Ambassador called on me this afternoon to continue the discussion on the terms of the proposed Agreement between our two countries in regard to Portuguese Africa.

His Excellency had referred my two drafts (A) and (B) to his Government, and was prepared generally to express their views on the subject. Except for the inclusion of Timor, the changes suggested were not very numerous, and, so far as I could see at the moment, almost entirely verbal; the most important objection taken being to the reference in Article IV of Declaration (B) to the maintenance of the existing Treaties between Great Britain and Portugal. Count Hatzfeldt pointed out that there was nothing in the Agreements, so far as he knew, which made such a Declaration necessary; while it would render it obligatory on his Government to consider the bearing of every Treaty to which reference was thus made, a course which might prove inconvenient, and could in no case serve any useful purpose.

I replied that the Article had been inserted with a view of reassuring Portuguese opinion in the event of Agreement (B) coming to their knowledge, but I admitted that its omission would not in any way alter the mutual obligation of Great Britain and Portugal, and I would not therefore insist upon it.

The most difficult question arose, however, not in connection with anything in the Agreements, but on a subject which had been omitted from them.

This country already possessed pre-emptive rights in regard to Delagoa Bay, and it might hereafter acquire special privileges in connection with that or some other portion of the provinces whose customs duties were assigned as security for our loan. Now, it was on the question of Delagoa Bay (said Count Hatzfeldt) that German opinion was most sensitive, and it was the surrender of all German claims to interfere, directly or indirectly, in the affairs of the Transvaal that would most excite German opposition to the proposed Agreement. The only way in which this opposition could be neutralised would be to show that Great Britain could not enter into the undisputed enjoyment of any territorial or other advantages in Delagoa Bay unless and until Germany acquired similar advantages in the region to which she was prepared, under the Agreements, to confine her interest.

I pointed out to his Excellency that, while I quite understood the position of his Government and (whether I agreed with it or not) felt no call to criticise it, he must also take into account the public opinion of this country. We were in actual possession of pre-emption rights in Delagoa Bay, and though I thought it in the highest degree improbable that under the new condition of things to be called into existence by the Anglo-German Agreement these rights would ever be exercised, yet we could hardly be expected to abandon them. I finally agreed to consider whether a separate Article might not be framed, which, while carrying out the object he desired, would not deprive us of our existing rights. This might perhaps be effected by a clause providing that if either country obtained and exercised privileges not contemplated by the Agreements, it should abstain from objecting to the other country obtaining and exercising similar privileges, it being of course understood that the privileges were in every case to be confined to the regions in which the two Powers were respectively interested under the terms of the Agreements.

Reverting to the question of Zanzibar, on which his Excellency had made an offer on the 20th instant in exchange for Timor, I told him that on reflection I had decided not to accept it. The offer was to the effect that the extraterritorial jurisdiction of Germany in Zanzibar should cease if and when Germany obtained control of the Customs assigned as security for her loan. A transaction of this kind, however, could not fail to produce the impression that the two Powers both contemplated and desired such an eventuality. It had the air of being a bribe held out to us by Germany to hasten the dismemberment of Portugal; a bribe which would be paid over only when this end was accomplished.

This impression, though inevitable, would be quite erroneous, and most unfortunate. On the whole, therefore, I preferred leaving the question of Zanzibar to be dealt with separately, though I did not conceal my opinion that the maintenance of a privilege which might embarrass the Government of Zanzibar, but could do Germany no possible good, was a thing to be regretted.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

No. 89.

Sir F. Lascelles to Mr. Balfour.

Homburg, August 23, 1898.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

D. 3:55 P.M.

Tel. (No. 5.) Africa.

R. 7:30 P.M.

I have received following from German Emperor:—

“I consider our conversation to have been most satisfactory. Have telegraphed contents to Berlin London and issued instructions in the sense we agreed about.”

I am at a loss to understand last sentence, unless it refers to compensation for Blantyre or that I persuaded him that a real desire for a good understanding with

Germany existed in England. There was no agreement except that I should report substance of His Majesty's language, which I did in my telegram of yesterday.

Despatch with details by messenger.

[*ED. NOTE.*—There is no report in the Foreign Office Archives of Mr. Balfour's interview with Count Hatzfeldt of the 27th August, *G.P. XIV*, Pt. I. pp. 344-6.]

No. 90.

*Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.**

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 149.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 31, 1898.

I transmit to your Excellency, for your information, a copy of a Convention signed on the 30th instant between Great Britain and Germany, respecting the position of the two Powers in connection with a possible loan to Portugal on the security of the customs revenues of the Portuguese Provinces of Mozambique and Angola, and the Portuguese portion of the Island of Timor.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

* Also to Mr. Thornton, No. 93, Africa, Confidential.

Enclosure in No. 90.

Convention.⁽¹⁾

In view of the possibility that Portugal may require financial assistance from some foreign Power or Powers, and in order to obviate the international complications which such a condition of things may produce, and to preserve her integrity and independence, the Undersigned, duly authorised by their respective Sovereigns, have agreed as follows :—

I. Whenever either the British or the German Government is of opinion that it is expedient to accede to a request for an advance of money to Portugal on the security of the Customs revenues or other revenues of Mozambique, Angola, and the Portuguese part of the Island of Timor, it shall communicate the fact to the other Government, and the other Government shall have the right to advance a portion of the total sum required.

In the event of the other Government signifying its intention to exercise this right, the two Governments shall consult as to the terms of the two loans, and these loans shall be issued on the security of the Customs revenues of Mozambique, Angola, and Portuguese Timor as near as possible simultaneously. The loans shall bear as near as possible the same proportion to each other as the amounts of the Customs revenues respectively assigned as their security.

The loans shall be issued on terms as favourable to Portugal as the condition of the money market and the security of the loans permit, and shall in other respects be subject as near as possible to similar conditions.

II. Of the Customs revenues, referred to in Article I, those of the Province of Mozambique south of the Zambezi, and of the part of that province lying on the left

⁽¹⁾ [This Convention, and also the Secret Convention and the Note following were in both German and English. The German text, not reproduced owing to considerations of space, is in *G.P. XIV*, 347-355.]

bank of the Zambezi above its confluence with the Shiré, and those of the portions of the Province of Angola, as hereinafter described, shall be assigned to the British loan. The Customs revenues of the remaining parts of the Provinces of Mozambique and Angola and the Customs revenues of Portuguese Timor shall be assigned to the German loan.

The portion of the Province of Angola, of which the Customs revenues shall be assigned to the British loan, is comprised within the following limits: the northern frontier shall run from the coast along the 8th parallel of south latitude to the 16th degree of longitude east of Greenwich, thence it shall descend that degree to the 9th parallel of latitude, and shall follow that parallel eastwards as far as the frontier of the Congo Free State. The southern frontier shall start from a point on the coast 5 English miles north of Egito, and shall run thence due east to the eastern frontier of the Province of Angola. The western frontier shall be the sea; the eastern frontier shall be the eastern limit of the Province of Angola.

III. Any Delegates sent by Great Britain or Germany to take note of the collection of the revenues which are the security for their respective loans shall have only rights of inspection, but no rights of administration, interference, or control, so long as there is no default in the payment of interest or sinking fund.

IV. In case of default in the payment of the interest or sinking fund of either loan, the administration of the various custom-houses in the two provinces and in Portuguese Timor shall be handed over by Portugal: those assigned for the German loan to Germany, those assigned for the British loan to Great Britain.

V. It is well understood that all rights, whether British or German, acquired in the provinces affected before the date of this Convention, shall be fully safeguarded, provided they are of a purely private character, and convey neither political rights nor territorial or administrative jurisdiction.

It is also understood that no influence will be used in the future, either by the British or the German Governments, to obtain fresh Concessions, except in those portions of the provinces of which the customs revenues are assigned to their respective loans.

VI. The present Convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications thereof shall be exchanged as soon as possible. The Convention shall come into force immediately after the exchange of ratifications.

In witness whereof the Undersigned, duly authorised, have signed the same, and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in duplicate, at London, the 30th day of August, 1898.

(L.S.) ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.
(L.S.) P. HATZFELDT.

No. 91.

*Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.**

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 150.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 31, 1898.

With reference to my despatch No. 149. Africa. of this day's date, I transmit, for your information, a copy of a Secret Convention between Great Britain and Germany, signed on the 30th instant, which explains more fully the position of the two Powers in connection with a possible loan to Portugal on the security of the customs revenues of the Provinces of Angola and Mozambique, and of the Portuguese portion of the Island of Timor.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

* Also to Mr. Thornton, No. 94, Africa, Secret.

Enclosure in No. 91.

Secret Convention.

Whereas, notwithstanding the provisions of the preceding Convention of this day's date, it may unfortunately not be found possible to maintain the integrity of the African possessions of Portugal south of the Equator, as well as of those in Timor, the Undersigned, duly authorised by their respective Sovereigns. have further agreed as follows :—

I. Great Britain and Germany agree jointly to oppose the intervention of any third Power in the Provinces of Mozambique, Angola, and in Portuguese Timor, either by way of loan to Portugal on the security of the revenues of those provinces, or by way of acquisition of territory, by grant, cession, purchase, lease, or otherwise.

II. It is understood that, from the conclusion of the Conventions of this day's date, Great Britain will abstain from advancing any claim of whatsoever kind to the possession, occupation, control, or exercise of political influence in or over those portions of the Portuguese provinces in which the Customs revenues have been assigned to Germany, and that Germany will in like manner abstain from advancing any claim of whatsoever kind to the possession, occupation, control, or exercise of political influence, in or over those portions of those Portuguese provinces in which the Customs revenues have been assigned to Great Britain.

III. In case Portugal renounces her sovereign rights over Mozambique, Angola, and Portuguese Timor, or loses these territories in any other manner, it is understood that the subjects of, and natives of the Protectorates of, one Contracting Party, together with their goods and ships, and also the produce and the manufactures of its dominions, possessions, Colonies and Protectorates, shall, in such portions of the territories comprised in the present Convention as may fall to the other Contracting Party, participate in all the prerogatives, exemptions and privileges with regard to trade, commerce, taxation and navigation which are there enjoyed by the subjects of, and natives of the Protectorates of, the other Contracting Party.

IV. With regard to the Vth Article of the Convention of to-day's date, which refers to private rights of British or German subjects in the Provinces of Mozambique, Angola, and Portuguese Timor, it is well understood between the two Governments that this Articles applies, among others, to the so-called Katembe Concession, and, further, that the Government of Great Britain will adopt a friendly attitude in respect to the confirmation of this Concession by the Portuguese Government in case such a confirmation should be applied for.

V. The present Convention shall be ratified, and the ratifications thereof shall be exchanged as soon as possible. The Convention shall come into force immediately after the exchange of ratifications.

In witness whereof the Undersigned, duly authorised, have signed the same, and have affixed thereto their seals.

Done in duplicate, at London, the 30th day of August, 1898.

(L.S.) ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.
(L.S.) P. HATZFELDT.

No. 92.

*Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.**

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

(No. 151.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 31, 1898.

With further reference to my despatch No. 149, Africa, of this day's date, I transmit, for your Excellency's Confidential information, a copy of a Secret note, signed by Count Hatzfeldt and myself on the 30th instant, respecting the position of Great Britain and Germany in certain eventualities in regard to the Portuguese possessions in Africa, south of the Equator, and the Portuguese portion of the Island of Timor.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

* Also to Mr. Thornton, No. 95, Africa, Secret.

Enclosure in No. 92.

Secret Note.

In order to make clear the intention of the two Conventions of this day's date, it is further understood between the two Governments as follows :—

In the event of one of the two Governments obtaining from the Portuguese Government before the contingency contemplated in Article III of the Secret Convention a cession of territory, or the concession of special privileges not of an occasional character, in those portions of the Portuguese Provinces of Mozambique, Angola, or Timor, the customs revenues of which have been assigned to it, it is well understood between the two Governments that such cessions of territory, or concessions of privileges, shall not become operative until analogous grants as near as possible of equal value have been accorded to the other Government in those portions of the provinces, the customs revenues of which have been assigned to it by the present arrangement.

In case either Government applies for special privileges of an occasional character, it shall immediately inform the other Government, and if these privileges are granted, and if the other Government should desire it, shall use its influence to obtain for the other Government similar special privileges of an occasional character and of equal value.

And whereas, owing to the imperfect surveys which alone are at present available, the IInd Article of the Convention of this day's date may not exactly carry out the intentions of the Contracting Parties, it is understood between them that in any case the port and town of Ambriz shall be included in the security assigned to Germany.

In case, therefore, that the port and town of Ambriz should be found to lie to the south of the 8th parallel of south latitude, the line of demarcation shall start from a point on the coast 5 English miles south of the port of Ambriz, and be continued thence due east until it reaches the 16th degree of longitude east of Greenwich.

From the intersection of the line, which may be determined as the line of demarcation, with the 16th degree of longitude aforesaid, the line shall, if necessary, be extended along that degree of longitude so far south of the 9th parallel of south latitude as will secure to Germany a strip of territory not less than a geographical

degree in width between the southern extremity of the Congo Free State in the region of Lunda and the northern frontier of the portion of Angola of which the customs revenues are assigned to Great Britain.

Done in duplicate, at London, the 30th day of August, 1898.

(L.S.) ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.
(L.S.) P. HATZFELDT.

No. 93.

Mr. Balfour to M. de Soveral.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1466.

Sir,

Foreign Office, August 31, 1898.

I promised to let you know as soon as the negotiations with Germany, about which we have already had some conversation, were brought to an issue. This has now occurred, and an arrangement has been come to between the two countries which will, I trust, in future prevent any complications in connection with South Africa.

I have always, as you know, been of opinion that this was quite as much for the interests of Portugal as for those of the other Powers concerned; and I remember saying to you, in this connection, that if, to meet the contingency of Portugal desiring to borrow, Germany and Great Britain came to an agreement about a loan, it would be my earnest desire to provide that the contraction of such a loan by Portugal should involve neither loss nor diminution of her sovereign rights, still less any cession of territory. These ends have been carefully kept in view, and it has, moreover, been stipulated that, if a loan be asked for, the money shall be provided by the two Powers on the easiest terms, compatible with security, which the money markets of the day allow.

I hope this will prove satisfactory to you.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The expectation on which the Treaty was based, namely, that Portugal would be compelled to raise a loan based on the security of her colonial revenues was not realised and the treaty therefore remained inoperative. Lord Grey, *Twenty-five Years* [1925], I, 45, says the Portuguese Minister, M. de Soveral, knew all about the secret agreement with Germany “and had made no secret to Lord Salisbury of his knowledge of it.”]

No. 94.

Mr. Balfour to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1467.

(No. 153.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 1, 1898.

The German Ambassador called on me this afternoon in order to speak to me about a possible complication which might arise in connection with the recent Anglo-German Agreements. He pointed out the possibility of the Portuguese Government, in ignorance of its exact terms, going to France rather than to the two Powers for the purpose of obtaining a loan upon the security of the customs in her African Colonies. Such a transaction might be concluded before we knew anything about it; but inasmuch as, under the Anglo-German Agreements, the two countries would be bound to resist French intervention, by force if necessary, it was manifest that all four Powers might find themselves unawares involved in the gravest complications.

All this might be avoided if it was known beforehand—at all events by the Portuguese Government—that we could not admit the intervention in this matter of a third Power and that we were prepared to give every facility ourselves to the raising of the necessary loan.

He assured me that, according to information received by his Government, Portugal had already been sounding France with a view to obtaining financial assistance.

The French Government had returned a dilatory reply, saying that they could not come to any decision on the matter until the 1st October.

We had, therefore, only the present month in which to provide against this possible danger, and he suggested that I should see M. de Soveral and indicate to him the general views of the two Governments.

I promised to consider the matter and to lay his observations before Lord Salisbury, in case, as was probable, my control of the Foreign Office had ceased before any decision could be arrived at.

I am, &c.

A. J. BALFOUR.

MINUTE.

I expected this. They are not content to wait for events to give them their share of Portuguese territory, but wish to force the pace of destiny. I do not think that it is possible to make such an intimation to Portugal till we know of the sort of financial terms Germany is disposed to give. They will be of the Shylock school.

There is no real danger to us—free right of pre-emption protects the East Coast: and our ownership of the hinterland protects Loanda.—S.

No. 95.

Mr. Balfour to Mr. Thornton.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1467.

Foreign Office, September 2, 1898.

Tel. (No. 29.) Africa. Confidential.

D. 6.30 P.M.

Anglo-German Agreement.

M. de Soveral knows and has probably informed his Government that Great Britain and Germany have agreed to share any loan Portugal may require on the security of her South African possessions. He does not know that the two Powers have further agreed to exclude any third Power from interference in those regions. Under these circumstances it is just possible that Portugal may endeavour to open negotiations for a loan with France on terms which would be inconsistent with the Anglo-German understanding. This would lead to serious complications, and if you get any hint that the Portuguese Government are contemplating such a step you should at once communicate here.

Of course you have present to your mind that by our existing right of pre-emption, quite apart from the Anglo-German arrangement, Portugal is precluded from borrowing on the security of Delagoa Bay. If therefore she wants a considerable loan and wants it on favourable terms she should apply to the two Powers.

A somewhat similar telegram will be sent to your German colleague with whom you should keep in touch respecting this matter.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1449.

(No. 106.) Africa. Confidential.

Berlin, D. September 2, 1898.

R. September 5, 1898.

My Lord,

I called by appointment this morning on M. de Bülow, who has been staying for a few days in Berlin, and is about to leave again.

I told his Excellency that I had been anxious to see him, as I wished to speak to him about my recent conversation with the Emperor, which formed the subject of my despatch No. 102, Africa, of the 23rd ultimo.⁽¹⁾

M. de Bülow said that the Emperor had written to him on the subject, and had expressed his satisfaction at the language I had held. His Majesty had, in fact, spoken of me in very flattering terms, and had expressed the opinion that I had largely contributed to put matters on a better footing.

I replied that nothing could give me greater pleasure than to think that anything I had said could have contributed to such a result, but that I had been somewhat perplexed at receiving a telegram from the Emperor, in which His Majesty, after expressing satisfaction at our conversation, stated that he had issued instructions in the sense we had agreed on. Now, I was not aware that we had come to any agreement at all. The two points which I had tried to impress upon His Majesty were: (1) that there was a sincere desire in England for a good understanding with Germany; (2) that there was a general impression in England that the demands of Germany in Africa were exorbitant.

M. de Bülow said that he could tell me confidentially that what had gratified the Emperor in the language which I had held to him was that I had informed him that, in my conversations with important personages in England, I had pointed out that His Majesty's difficulty in entering into negotiations for closer relations with England was that, if the negotiations should fail, and should come to the knowledge of other countries, Germany would be liable to invasion on two sides, in which case the British fleet would be unable to render her much assistance, and that His Majesty was grateful to me for having put this consideration prominently forward. As regards the instructions which His Majesty had issued, M. de Bülow said that His Majesty had telegraphed direct to Count Hatzfeldt to be as conciliatory ("coulant") as possible in the negotiations with regard to the Portuguese Loan, more especially with regard to the line of the Shiré.

M. de Bülow added that these negotiations had now been concluded by the signature of the Convention, of which I was no doubt aware. Personally, he rejoiced that an arrangement had been arrived at, but he foresaw that when this arrangement became known, if it ever did, there would be an outcry in Germany, as it would be considered that she had yielded far too much. He himself was well aware of the enormous difference between English and German colonial interests, and considered it natural that the larger share should fall to England.

I replied that I also rejoiced that an arrangement had been arrived at, but that I had little doubt that Her Majesty's Government would also be strongly criticised for having yielded so much.

M. de Bülow said, in conclusion, that Count Hatzfeldt had informed him that you intended to inform M. de Soveral of the nature of the arrangement which had been arrived at in connection with a Portuguese Loan, which, it was to be hoped, would ensure the maintenance of the integrity of the Portuguese possessions.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

⁽¹⁾ [V. No. 122, p. 100. The telegram giving account of the same interview is reproduced above, No. 87, p. 68.]

No. 97.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1447.

(No. 160.) Africa. Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 9, 1898.

With reference to my despatch No. 153 of the 1st instant, respecting the fear of the German Government that Portugal might endeavour to raise in France a loan on the security of the customs revenue of her South African Colonies, I have to state that Mr. Bertie, by my direction, informed the German Ambassador on the 8th instant, that, in my opinion, M. de Soveral being already acquainted with the general purport of the Anglo-German Agreement, it would be sufficient that I should intimate to him that any loan from France must not be secured on the customs of Angola, and that warning I would convey to him.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 98.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1447.

(No. 168.) Africa. Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 19, 1898.

The German Ambassador, in conversation with Mr. Bertie on the 10th instant, reverted to the question which formed the subject of my despatch No. 160, Africa, Secret, of the 9th instant, as to the possibility of Portugal endeavouring to raise in France a loan secured on the revenues of her South African Colonies. His Excellency suggested that in order to make sure that the warning given to M. de Soveral should be known to the Portuguese Government, the same warning should be conveyed to them through the British and German Representatives at Lisbon, or, at all events, that the Portuguese Government should be informed of the warning given.

Count Hatzfeldt informed Mr. Bertie, confidentially, that the French Minister at Lisbon had stated to his German colleague that the agreement which had evidently been come to between England and Germany about South Africa would necessitate measures on the part of France to protect her financial interests in Portugal; that as Germany had taken steps to secure her interests in South Africa, France must do the same elsewhere; and that her action would take the shape of a French control of Portuguese finances, unless she should be anticipated in such action by England and Germany.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 99.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1467.

(No. 176.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 3, 1898.

With reference to my despatch No. 175 of this day's date, relating to the enquiry made by the Portuguese Government as to the nature of the financial assistance that the British and German Governments would be ready to offer, I have to inform you that the German Chargé d'Affaires called on the 22nd ultimo, and, in conversation

with Sir Thomas Sanderson, said that his Government understood that such assistance would take the form of a loan guaranteed by one or other of the two Powers in the same manner as the Egyptian Guaranteed Loan.

The conditions of issue and the banks which should take part in it would be matter of agreement between the Portuguese Government and the Government guaranteeing the loan.

The German Chargé d'Affaires stated confidentially as an additional reason for promptitude in settling the loan with Portugal that according to a report received from the German Minister at Lisbon certain French financial establishments were ready to facilitate the conversion of the Portuguese Debt by a loan of £6,000,000 on the following conditions :—

1. An increased cession of the Customs revenues of Portugal for the service of the foreign debt.
2. Assignment of the revenues of all the railways in Portugal to be placed under the administration of the Royal Railway Company (equivalent, in reality, to a French Control).
3. Formation of an Issue Committee to superintend the issue of notes of the Bank of Portugal, and also to receive the revenues of the customs and railways and hand them over to the financiers representing the foreign debt.

In reference to these proposals I must recall to your Excellency's mind that up to this time Her Majesty's Government have expressed a strong objection to any form of joint guarantee or loan, though perfectly willing to assume a separate responsibility for such portion of the total sum to be raised, as may be agreed upon.

I am not in a position to assent to any procedure which involves a modification of this view.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

No. 100.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1467.
(No. 123A.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 7, 1898.

The Portuguese Minister called at this Office on the 5th instant and made, for my information, a communication respecting the loan for which the Portuguese Government are negotiating in Paris.

I have expressed to M. de Soveral generally my satisfaction at the statement made by him on the part of the Portuguese Government in regard to the loan which they seek to raise in Paris, and I have stated to him that, under the limitations which he had mentioned, the financial measures taken by Portugal for dealing with her creditors are a matter entirely for her own decision.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1467.

(No. 131.) Africa. Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 29, 1898.

The Enclosure in your despatch No. 99, Secret, of the 15th instant, shows that, among the revenues to be assigned to the service of the loan for which the Portuguese Government is negotiating in Paris, are included those of the islands adjacent to Portugal.

The expression "adjacent islands" may include the Azores. If it does, the matter assumes an aspect to which Her Majesty's Government cannot be indifferent. They have no desire to interfere unnecessarily with the arrangements which the Portuguese Government may make with a view to placing their finances on a satisfactory basis.

The Treaty engagements between the two countries, however, lay an obligation on Great Britain to defend Portugal against external attack, but it is incumbent on Portugal not to modify the general conditions under which the continued existence of the engagement has been acknowledged.

The conditions to which I refer would be seriously modified if the Azores passed directly or indirectly under the control of any third Power. The creation of a lien on the revenues of the islands might conceivably lead to the establishment in them of conditions which would hamper Her Majesty's Government in carrying out their obligations to Portugal. In these circumstances, I have to request you to call the attention of the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs to the matter, and to state that Her Majesty's Government feel bound to ask the Portuguese Government to give an undertaking in writing that the Azores shall not, without the written consent of this country, pass under the control of any third Power.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1447.

(No. 203.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 21, 1898.

In the course of conversation this afternoon, I informed Count Hatzfeldt that I had stated to the Portuguese Minister that we should view with extreme aversion any arrangement made by Portugal that would tend to place the islands of the Azores under the power or influence of any nation except Portugal. I was speaking, as your Excellency is already aware, in reference to proposals that were current for a loan, and suggestions that, among other things, the revenues of the custom-houses of the Azores might be made part of the security for the loan.

I informed Count Hatzfeldt that I had made this protest because I had reason to apprehend the possibility of some intrigue that would give to France an undue position in the islands in question.

Count Hatzfeldt received this information with rather a disconcerted manner, and did not return for some little time to the easy indifference by which his conversation up to this moment had been distinguished. I am not able, however, to suggest any explanation for this change of manner.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 103.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1447.

(No. 204.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 21, 1898.

Count Hatzfeldt expressed to me, with some emphasis, this afternoon, that it was the desire of his Government that the Treaties which have been concluded between Germany and England with regard to a loan to Portugal should not at present be made public, but that, at all events, if either Power should desire to publish them, it should not do so without previously ascertaining that the other Power was an assenting Party. I concurred in his Excellency's view.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 104.

Sir H. MacDonell to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1467.

(No. 108.) Africa. Secret.

My Lord,

*Lisbon, D. December 31, 1898.**R. January 23, 1899.*

In conformity with your Lordship's instructions I profited by the first occasion to represent to the Minister of Foreign Affairs that among the revenues to be assigned to the service of the loan which the Portuguese Government is negotiating in Paris it was proposed to include the "adjacent islands."

I pointed out to his Excellency that, whilst Her Majesty's Government had no desire to interfere unnecessarily with the arrangements which the Portuguese Government may think fit to make in order to place their finances on a more satisfactory basis, the existing Treaty engagements between the two countries lay an obligation on Great Britain to defend Portugal against external attack; the creation, therefore, of a lien on the revenue of any of the islands might conceivably lead to the establishment in them of conditions which would hamper Her Majesty's Government in carrying out their obligations towards Portugal. Consequently, Her Majesty's Government feel bound to ask the King's Government to give an undertaking in writing that the Azores shall not, without the consent of Great Britain, pass under the control of any Power.

Senhor Beirão seemed at first somewhat surprised, if not put out, by my communication, and endeavoured to ridicule the idea that the Portuguese Government could ever be compelled to part with, or consent to, the islands passing under the control of another Power.

His Excellency, however, undertook to submit my communication to the Council, and he subsequently informed me that, in deference to the views of Her Majesty's Government, his colleagues have decided to strike out the revenues assigned to the service of the loan those of the adjacent islands and limit the security they offer to the customs revenues of the "Métropole continentale." . . .⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

H. G. MACDONELL.

P.S.—I beg to inform your Lordship that the delay in forwarding this despatch is due to the non-reception of the enclosure,⁽²⁾ which only came to hand on the 15th instant.

H. G. MACD.

January 17, 1899.⁽¹⁾ [Details follow as to "adjacent islands."]⁽²⁾ Not reproduced.

No. 105.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Africa (Germany) 222.

(No. 11.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 11, 1899.

The German Ambassador called upon me to-day. He spoke of our African Agreement. He had no definite propositions to make, but he was rather apprehensive that Portugal, in seeking for resources to meet her financial difficulties, might alienate rights over customs duties which England and Germany had already agreed they could not see alienated without disquietude. I said that I had heard of no such proposals; that it did not seem to matter so much if special customs duties were pledged to private individuals, for the Governments that were concerned could not admit that any such engagements affected the political future of the territories involved. But at present I saw no reason for apprehension on this score. His Excellency then spoke of Liberia and of the Caroline Islands. I repeated, as I had done before, the strongest objections on the part of Her Majesty's Government to any interference with Liberia, both on account of her territorial interests and on account of the sentimental interest which was taken by large sections of Her Majesty's subjects in the experiment involved in the preservation of Liberia.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 106.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Africa (Portugal) 227.

(No. 6.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 11, 1899.

The Portuguese Minister called on me to-day, merely desiring to inform me that in deference to the representations and remonstrances of Great Britain, the custom-houses of the Islands of the Azores had been struck out of the security which it was proposed to offer for any loan which Portugal might succeed in obtaining. I thanked him, and expressed my satisfaction at this intimation. In reply to further questions which I addressed to him, he seemed to think that the efforts of Portugal to raise a loan in the French market were not likely to be successful, and he rather intimated that he thought that this negative result was due to the adverse exertions of Germany. I said that I thought it was not necessary to make any such assumption. Countries much larger and much more powerful than Portugal had in the present state of the world found it impossible to raise any considerable resources in the Paris market.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 107.

Foreign Office to Colonial Office.

Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 8, 1899.

I have laid before the Marquess of Salisbury your letter, Secret and Immediate, of the 4th instant, on the subject of the conditions under which Her Majesty's Government might assent to the confirmation of the Catembe Concession at Lourenço Marques. . . .

The essential point was to prevent any rights acquired by M. Eiffé under his Concession from ever passing into the hands of a foreign State or Company, and this object has been secured by the assurance given in M. de Soveral's note of the 2nd instant, namely, that the Company working the Concession is, and will, remain a Portuguese Company, and that it has no power to alienate the foreshore. . . .

I am, &c.

T. H. SANDERSON.

No. 108.

Sir H. MacDonell to Mr. Bertie.

F.O. Africa (Portugal) 228.

Secret.

Lisbon, D. April 20, 1899.

My dear Bertie,

R. April 24, 1899.

This letter goes to you by the Portuguese F.O. messenger who proceeds to England with instructions to Castro and to Senhor Madeira Pinto (the Portuguese Financial Agent) to confer with you confidentially as to a scheme for temporarily rescuing Portugal from the clutches of France and from those of the numerous political and financial sharks which at present hover round it.

The scheme which Castro will submit to you is simple enough. The former Administration, as I have often reported, though hard pressed for funds, always held to their only valuable asset, and on leaving office passed it over intact to their successors. It was always understood that this asset, which was represented by 72,000 debentures of the Portuguese Royal Railways which, at the last quotation, were valued at £840,000 was to be held in reserve for the payment of the Berne Award.

On coming into office, the present Administration, finding itself in great straits and probably reckoning on a long postponement of the Berne decision, mortgaged for £500,000 the said debentures with certain French financiers and through the local banker, Count Burnay.

So far as I can make out the stock in question has shortly to be redeemed, but it appears that Burnay managed to insert a clause in the contract, by which, if the debentures are not redeemed before the time expires, he and his Paris friends have the option of retaining them altogether at a specified price.

If the 72,000 debentures pass into the hands of the French, they will necessarily give the latter the absolute control of the Portuguese railways, and if this Government to save the stock is thrown upon its own resources to find the sum required to retain a voice in the management of their lines, they will be tempted to turn to the *deus ex machinâ* Colonel Thys, who will no doubt be most willing to assist them, for a consideration—in the shape of facilities for the many objects he has in view.

Furthermore, an ominous report reaches me, which I have not yet been able to fathom but which I think it right to mention, namely that Colonel Thys and his acolytes are not altogether unconnected with the object of Dr. Leyds's visit to Lisbon; and if as I am told Dr. Leyds disposes of a considerable amount of money, there is no reason why he should not advance to the Portuguese Government through Colonel Thys the £500,000 required to liberate the debentures and by some secret arrangement, retain a lien on them and possibly place them at the disposal of the Portuguese Government to meet the Award.

Now, if by some such plan as that which Castro will fully submit to you, Her Majesty's Government would persuade Messrs. Glynn or some other important financial firm in London to advance the £500,000 which this Government require, I cannot help thinking that it would be a political master-stroke—the more so as Her Majesty's Government need not appear.

By obtaining a lien on so considerable a number of shares we should acquire a considerable voice in the administration of the Portuguese railways (almost equal to that of the French) we should hold, in any case, a guarantee for the payment of the Award and finally we should effectually baffle the Belgian and Transvaal intrigue.

It may be objected that our understanding with Germany precludes our assisting Portugal single-handed, but as it is not intended that Her Majesty's Government should take part in the transaction, beyond recommending it to a financial firm in order to secure the payment of the bondholders of the Lourenço Marques Railway—there is no reason why Germany should take umbrage.

Of course the success of the scheme depends upon what security this Government can offer for the £500,000 for sixty days, but, if it can be effected, our position here will be paramount and we could then challenge all intrigues.

Yours ever sincerely,

H. G. MacDONELL.

No. 109.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Portugal 1361.

(No. 33.) Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 7, 1899.

M. de Soveral spoke to me this afternoon at length upon the financial condition of Portugal. He took a favourable view of it, and thought that there was no necessity for any external loan. He feared, however, that it was the interest of some foreign Powers, especially Germany and France, that there should be a loan, in order that when its proceeds had been extravagantly disposed of, and there was a difficulty in finding the interest, a control over the customs of Portugal might be asked for. I said that I thought that the Portuguese Government would be very unwise in granting any such control, and that we should strongly oppose it.

M. de Soveral entirely concurred with me as to the inexpediency of such a measure; "but," he said, "it is possible that the pressure may assume an excessive form." "Do you mean," I replied, "that any Government would send you an ultimatum, demanding the institution of a control, for the payment of the creditors of its nationality?" M. de Soveral answered in the affirmative. I said that our objection to a control would be a very serious one, even if it was consented to by Portugal itself, and that I reserved entirely the course which Her Majesty's Government might think it right to take in such an event. But if it was attempted to force a control upon the Portuguese Government against its will, I did not think that considering the relations that existed between this country and Portugal, and the engagements that from old time had subsisted between them, that it was possible that Her Majesty's Government could treat with indifference any such demand. It would obviously be only the preliminary to demands of a much graver nature.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 110.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Africa (Portugal) 227.

(No. 59.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 17, 1899.

With reference to your despatch No. 33, Africa, Secret, of the 16th ultimo, reporting the suggestions which had been made to you by the Dutch Minister at Lisbon in regard to the Netherlands Railway of Lourenço Marques, I transmit to you a copy of a letter from the Colonial Office.⁽¹⁾ respecting a rumour to the effect that the Government of the South African Republic may endeavour to obtain the control of this line. I have to request you to inform the Portuguese Government of this rumour, and to state that, having regard to the fact that such a transfer of the practical control of the railway would infringe the pre-emptive rights which have been granted by Portugal to Great Britain, Her Majesty's Government could not regard the transfer of the control to a foreign Power as otherwise than an unfriendly act, but that they feel confident that no such arrangement will be countenanced by the Cabinet of Lisbon.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

⁽¹⁾ Not printed.

No. 111.

Sir H. MacDonell to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Africa. (Portugal) 228.

(No. 51.) Africa. Secret.

My Lord,

*Lisbon, D. July 15, 1899.**R. July 24, 1899.*

. . . .⁽¹⁾At the interview I had by appointment with His Excellency this morning Senhor Beiraô stated that he had referred the question of the importation of arms into the Transvaal to his colleagues in Council, and that they were of opinion that, considering the existence of the Treaty with the South African Republic of 1875, by which the passage of arms through Delagoa Bay had hitherto been governed, it would be difficult, if not impossible, to take the present opportunity to raise objections, without giving the Transvaal Government reason for complaint, or rather just cause for doubting the impartiality of the Portuguese Government at this juncture.

This Treaty, he said, was ratified in 1882 with the consent of Her Majesty's Government, after the amendment of many of its clauses, and Article VI, which regulates the transit of arms, never gave rise to any objection on the part of the latter, and had been freely applied each time that arms were landed at Delagoa Bay for transmission to the Transvaal.

I pointed out to his Excellency that the intention in which the article above-mentioned was drafted had been to meet the requirements of trade, but could not be invoked to justify the armament on an extraordinary scale of a whole nation, with a view too of turning its arms against the Suzerain Power.

I added that, since he asked me unofficially and privately what I thought of the awkward position in which events might place Portugal, I would venture to point out that though the present unsettled state of relations between Great Britain and the Transvaal need not necessarily lead to a rupture, nevertheless, the tension was sufficient to suggest the advisability of cautious action by restricting the introduction of arms to within the limits of trade requirements or of risking the reproach—in the

⁽¹⁾ [Earlier part refers to Senhor Beiraô's consultation of his colleagues.]

event of a rupture—of having countenanced the arming of the Republic's forces on a menacing scale.

His Excellency readily agreed that in the event of an outbreak the position of Portugal would be exceedingly difficult, yet he did not see how, with the Treaty of 1875 before them, the Government could act otherwise. "However," he added, "if you will lay our reply before Her Majesty's Government, we shall then see what objections the Marquess of Salisbury has to offer to the line we propose to follow in adhering strictly to Article VI of the Treaty."

I have, &c.

H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 112.

Sir H. MacDonell to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Portugal 1361.

(No. 59.) Secret.

Lisbon, D. July 22, 1899.

My Lord,

R. August 2, 1899.

With reference to your Lordship's despatch No. 33, Secret, of the 7th ultimo, a visit from the German Minister has given me the opportunity of sounding his Excellency as to the views of his Government with regard to the financial condition of Portugal.

I may here observe that, on my return to Lisbon in October last, I found that Count Tattenbach had been pressing the Portuguese Ministers—perhaps unduly—to accept the good offices of our respective Governments for the purpose of raising a loan; he then unreservedly admitted to me that he understood his instructions to convey that one of the objects of the Anglo-German Agreement was to induce the Portuguese Government to contract a loan in order that, when its proceeds had been extravagantly wasted, we should remain with a claim on the control of the Portuguese Colonial Customs.

I promptly informed him that I had received no such instructions from your Lordship, and that I hoped he did not expect me to follow him in that line of action. I have since had several conversations with him, and he appears to have realised the mistake he made in at first attempting to force a loan upon this Government, and especially of having approached the President of the Council on the subject—a mistake which may, perhaps, be attributed to over-confidence or inexperience. I have often found it difficult to account for the unexpected changes in the attitude of my German colleagues towards this Government. I may, however, state that Senhor Beirão has repeatedly assured me that Count Tattenbach has never of late laid stress on the institution of a control, and only referred to it casually, that, indeed, he had considerably modified his view as to the economic prospects of Portugal.

It is possible, therefore, that the peremptory language the Count held to the President of the Council before my return may at that time have led the Portuguese Government to apprehend an ultimatum, the more so as his Excellency subsequently announced the proposed visit of the German squadron.

I have heard it whispered by would-be "reliable informants" that the French and German Ministers were scheming to force a control upon this Government for the benefit of their respective creditors, but I have not succeeded in obtaining any sort of trustworthy confirmation of this report, nor are the relations between their Excellencies of such a nature as to lend colour to it—on the contrary.

At the interview I had with Count Tattenbach yesterday, he frankly admitted that a marked improvement had lately taken place in the financial situation of Portugal, but the Treasury, he observed, continues as ever in the same impecunious condition.

Still, as the present Administration had succeeded in securing an undisturbed tenure of office for at least a year longer, the Minister of Finance might stay the crisis for a certain time, provided he takes the proper precautions to improve the lot of the foreign bondholders.

The idea of a loan under the Anglo-German Agreement he now unhesitatingly admits as out of the question, in any case for the present; and the French scheme for a joint control, in his opinion, can be safely discarded, in consequence of the refusal of Her Majesty's Government to sanction or participate in it.

"As matters now stand," he said, "the creditors must wait for the negotiations now going on in London and Paris, and trust to the 'good intentions' of the Portuguese Government." He is evidently not disposed to be over-forbearing towards the Portuguese Government.

The French Minister has likewise spoken to me on several occasions on the same subject. He also takes a hopeful view of the situation, and is far more conciliatory in manner. Although he deplores the failure of the scheme which he had brought forward on behalf of the French financiers, and attributes its miscarriage to the determined opposition of Her Majesty's Government to a control, his Excellency nevertheless continues to favour and support every financial intrigue, with a view no doubt to further entangling this Government in the toils of the doubtful French financiers and speculators.

It is therefore well understood by my French and German colleagues, as well as by the Portuguese Ministers themselves, that Her Majesty's Government not only opposes a serious objection to a control, but also that your Lordship is not prepared to permit an attempt to enforce it.

Under these circumstances, I am disposed to think that the fear expressed by M. de Soveral that Portugal might at a given moment be exposed to an ultimatum from France or Germany is in a great measure groundless, though I am ready to admit that if the Portuguese Government, in its alleged improved financial position, overlooks its legitimate obligations towards its bondholders, and instead of bettering their prospects devotes any of its revenue to armaments, ships, colonial enterprises and so-called administrative reforms (devised to enlist supporters), it will expose itself to being reminded in plain and unequivocal terms that those Governments which represent the holders of Portuguese stock—generally distributed among small and necessitous investors—may at a given moment turn against it, and treat Portugal as other defaulting States have been treated.

So long as the Portuguese Government felt on the brink of bankruptcy they knocked at every possible door for financial help, offering to pay, and are now paying, the most usurious interest, 20 and 25 per cent., for small temporary loans. With these scanty advances, cleverly handled, and the arrival of a very large amount of produce from the Colonies, the Minister of Finance has succeeded in considerably reducing the rate of exchange. This, I may safely say, is the only feature that constitutes, in the opinion of the Government, the much-vaunted financial improvement.

The Minister of Finance, however, when in quest of funds, gave out that if he succeeded in procuring them, he would turn his immediate attention to arriving at a satisfactory arrangement with the bondholders. Now that the financial prospects of the country appear more hopeful, his Excellency seems inclined to disregard his promise. If the Portuguese Government actually adopt this course, it is then probable that the German and French Governments may call them to account, the former especially, as representing the Darmstadt Bank, in which the Emperor William is said to be largely interested.

I have, &c.

H. G. MACDONELL.

III.—THE ANGLO-PORTUGUESE AGREEMENT OF OCTOBER 14, 1899.

No. 113.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Africa (Portugal) 227.

(No. 92.) Africa. Secret.

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 13, 1899.

In an interview with M. de Soveral yesterday, I pressed upon him, in accordance with the wish of the Colonial Office, that the Portuguese Government should consent for the future to prevent the passage of munitions of war from Delagoa Bay to the Transvaal. I drew my arguments from the engagements to Great Britain which Portugal had formally accepted at the beginning of the last century, and which necessarily governed the interpretation of the Boer-Portuguese Treaty of 1875, to which the Lisbon Government was now appealing.

M. de Soveral however, absolutely declined to listen to this line of reasoning, and expressed his great regret that he had been at Marienbad when this question first arose. He would never have consented to put aside what he considered to be the plain provision of the Treaty of 1875. He said that he adhered to the same view still, but admitted that the change of front involved in now giving its obvious effect to the Treaty of 1875 lends to the Portuguese policy an appearance of uncertainty, which he very much regrets.

He informed me, however, that Portugal had no intention whatever of throwing England over, and that if war should unhappily break out, she fully recognised that she could not remain neutral, but must frankly declare herself on the side of England. In order to show the sincerity of this declaration, and that the resolution now to abide by the Treaty of 1875 was simply due to the obligation of the Treaty and not to any lukewarmness towards England, he was authorised by his Government to propose that the two Governments should now sign an engagement binding each to close alliance with the other in case of a war with the Transvaal. This engagement, he pointed out to me, would enable England to attack the Transvaal by the Delagoa Bay Railway, and to make Lourenço Marques our base of operations. I replied by fully acknowledging the importance of his communication, and promising to reply as soon as I had been able to consult my colleagues.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 114.

Sir H. MacDonell to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Africa (Portugal) 228.

(No. 71.) Africa. Confidential.

My Lord.

Lisbon, D. September 17, 1899.

R. September 27, 1899.

In continuation of my despatch No. 68, Africa, of the 6th instant relative to the transit of arms and military stores through Lourenço Marques, I have the honour to state that on the 11th instant the Minister for Foreign Affairs communicated to me the text of an instruction he had telegraphed to the Portuguese Chargé d'Affaires at Pretoria—as given in my telegram to your Lordship No. 37, Africa, Confidential. This telegram his Excellency thought would convince the South African Republic that no further supplies could pass, or in any case, would prepare the way for a future prohibition. I pointed out to him that I feared the communication in question

would have a different effect as the Portuguese Government thereby obviously admitted the right of the Transvaal Government to hold to their interpretation of the treaty.

Shortly after, I had occasion to call His Excellency's attention to the arrival of further consignments of arms for the Republic; he then informed me that the Portuguese Chargé d'Affaires had reported, in reply to his above-mentioned instruction, that he feared the Transvaal Government would consider any change on the part of the Portuguese Government as an unfriendly act and therefore strongly recommended his Government not to press the question. Consequently the Ministers in Council had agreed to abandon all idea of questioning the right of the South African Republic on this vexed point; but Senhor Beiraô added that as the King's Government were most anxious to convince Her Majesty's Government of their earnest desire to respond to the close and friendly relations which the latter invoke, they had determined to adopt a course which would be more in consonance with the expression of public opinion on the point at issue and with the sentiments which I had had occasion to express, on behalf of your Lordship, as a guide for Portugal in the present crisis.

His Excellency further gave me to understand that he had telegraphed to M. de Soveral to inform him of what had passed between us and of the pressure I had brought to bear on this Government to prevent the passage of the arms, &c., and instructing him to represent to your Lordship the difficult position in which the Portuguese Government would be placed, were they to insist on the interpretation set upon Article VI by Her Majesty's Government in opposition to that hitherto generally accepted.

It appears, if I understood his Excellency correctly, that Senhor Soveral replied concurring in his views, and at the same time suggested that the present would be a favourable opportunity for coming to a clear and definite understanding with Great Britain as to the attitude to be adopted by the King's Government on the present occasion.

In answer to my enquiry, Senhor Beiraô said that the Agreement suggested by M. de Soveral might assume the form of a convention, but that of course the Portuguese Government would leave it to your Lordship's judgment to indicate the bases upon which it should be drawn up, and he hoped that Her Majesty's Government would at the same time specify the extent of the risk that Portugal would incur and of the responsibility which Her Majesty's Government were prepared to assume in the event of the former being through force of circumstances involved in the conflict.

His Excellency referred to the exposed position of Lourenço Marques, but expressed a belief that if Portugal could succeed in maintaining its neutrality, no danger need be anticipated, as the importation of arms would necessarily cease on the declaration of hostilities.

His Excellency also alluded in a guarded way to the right of Great Britain to pass troops, &c., through Portuguese territory, but I carefully abstained from expressing an opinion as to whether that right might not be invoked.

Apart from other considerations, his Excellency did not see how Delagoa Bay could be made a strategical point without reopening the whole question and making it impossible to foretell the consequences thus entailed, especially in connection with the hypothetical conditions of the Anglo-German Agreement.

The Portuguese Government, he said, must make a supreme effort to maintain their neutrality or throw in their lot with Great Britain, but on clearly specified terms which would remove all doubt as to the ultimate security of their possessions in Africa, under the absolute guarantee of Her Majesty's Government.

At a subsequent interview, I learnt from Senhor Beiraô that M. de Soveral had laid before your Lordship the views of this Government on this all-important point, and that they are now anxiously awaiting your Lordship's answer.

I have, &c.

H. G. MACDONELL.

Sir H. MacDonell to Mr. Bertie.

F.O. Africa (Portugal) 228.

Private and Confidential.

Cintra, D. September 18, 1899.

My dear Bertie,

R. September 27, 1899.

The announcement that Hatzfeldt has had several interviews with Lord Salisbury has caused no little uneasiness in the minds of the Portuguese Ministers. They suspect these visits, taken in connection with the meddlesome attitude adopted by my German colleague, must have turned on the Transvaal question, and may affect German interests under the Agreement.

If there is a question at the present moment which preoccupies the Portuguese Government and to which they are disposed to take offence it is the fear that we may fall back upon the Secret Convention—whatever it may be—and finally leave them in the lurch. This fear therefore, and the pressure brought to bear by Germany, induced this Government to adopt the underhand decision of releasing the arms without my knowledge, and their main idea is now to discover the exact nature of that Agreement.

They are convinced that they have nothing to fear from the Boers, so long as they stand by us, and, having fostered an exaggerated idea of the value of their co-operation, fancy that they can set their own price on it.

On the other hand, so long as they suspect that we are acting with Germany, they will always fear that—whatever may be the fortunes of war—Germany will eventually profit, and may prevent us from securing the integrity of their territory.

As regards Lourenço Marques, they are well aware that they cannot defend it and that they will inevitably have to appeal to us; but they are also well aware that Germany knows this and is scheming accordingly.

As regards the French, they likewise are on the alert and are closely watching the Portuguese Government; they do so more tactfully and therefore inspire more confidence.

In short, the situation here is a web of uncertainty, intrigue and confusion; the Ministers being moreover not of a calibre to face it.

Soveral has until lately kept out of the way partly from opposition to the present Ministry and partly to further his own scheme of upsetting the Anglo-German Agreement by a direct convention with us. He is moreover firmly convinced that all this Transvaal question has been got up by Chamberlain, at Rhodes' and the Chartered Co.'s instigation; this idea is in some measure shared by the Government.

To sum up, my impression is that the Portuguese Government do not entirely trust us, hence their idea of a convention which would secure them from all danger not only from the Transvaal but also from Germany. To maintain themselves in their African possessions under present circumstances, they require men and money. Can we provide them without the knowledge of Germany?

I do not know when this letter will reach you, as there are no means of corresponding, except irregularly by tramp steamers, and another great drawback is that we receive no bags and that I am in utter ignorance of what is actually occurring, though I believe the Union and Castle Lines have resumed their calls.

Yours sincerely,

H. G. MACDONELL.

No. 116.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Africa (Portugal) 227.

(No. 96.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 23, 1899.

With reference to my despatch No. 92, Africa, of the 13th instant, recording the proposal made to me by the Portuguese Minister at this Court to meet the case of war between Great Britain and the Transvaal, I have to inform you that I had an interview to-day with M. de Soveral, during which I intimated to him that I had consulted my colleagues on the subject. I told him that Her Majesty's Government were of opinion that he was right in his judgment that, in the event of such a war, Portugal could not remain neutral, and that they would be willing to form an offensive and defensive alliance with Portugal against the Transvaal in such a contingency.

Any question of military movements arising out of such alliance could not be satisfactorily discussed until the circumstances were before us under which they would have to be undertaken.

I have, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 117.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. Africa (Portugal) 227.

(No. 102.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 7, 1899.

I enclose for your information a copy of some correspondence that has passed between M. de Soveral and me. It is a sequel to a conversation which has already been reported to you.

I saw M. de Soveral again last night, and he intimated to me that he saw nothing to object to in the general spirit of the criticisms which I had made upon his proposed formula; and he admitted that, for the reasons I had stated, it would not have been possible to adopt that formula. He was, however, averse to an undertaking to declare war, unless some cause of formal quarrel arose between Portugal and the Transvaal, on account of the comments which such a step would excite in Lisbon, and of the view which might be formed of it by other Powers whose ill-will Portugal did not desire unnecessarily to excite. He should, however, quite approve of an undertaking on the part of his country that no further supplies should pass from the seaboard through Portuguese territory to the Transvaal; and this he thought would satisfy all our immediate objects. It was fully the intention of the Portuguese Government, if a conflict should arise, to place itself on the side of Great Britain, but it was not necessary to make any arrangements with respect to the precise course to be adopted, under circumstances at present unforeseen. Portugal would always be willing to consider any further exigencies which the progress of events might impose upon Portugal in pursuance of ancient Treaties.

I expressed my general concurrence with these views, adding a hope that I should hear from him before long as to the definitive view his Government would take. I also called to his attention the inconvenience that would arise if Portugal made any formal declaration of neutrality, inasmuch as it would hinder the supply of coal to British ships from Lourenço Marques. I had no apprehension, however, that Portugal would be disposed to take this course, as it would be directly contrary to the assurances I had received from his Excellency.

I have, &c.

SALISBURY.

Enclosure 1 in No. 117.

M. de Soveral to the Marquess of Salisbury.

12, Gloucester Place,

London, October 2, 1899.

Dear Lord Salisbury,

You were good enough to ask me to send you my suggestions about the note to be exchanged between the two Governments.

I enclose it here.

Yours very truly,
L. SOVERAL.

Enclosure 2 in No. 117.

Draft of Note to be exchanged between Great Britain and Portugal.

Le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Très Fidèle et le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté la Reine de la Grande-Bretagne et d'Irlande, Impératrice des Indes, affirmant la validité des Traités entre les deux Couronnes, reconnaissent le devoir qu'ils ont de maintenir et de défendre réciproquement l'intégrité et la souveraineté de leurs territoires respectifs, et dans le cas de guerre entre la Grande-Bretagne et le Transvaal, se sont entendus pour prendre les mesures nécessaires pour assurer ce but.

Enclosure 3 in No. 117.

The Marquess of Salisbury to M. de Soveral.

Private.

Dear M. de Soveral,

I am much obliged to you for your letter, and for the proposed formula of Agreement which you enclose.

If we sign it it will be very carefully scrutinised, and therefore I have considered your words in conjunction with the ancient treaties to which you refer.

The obligation upon Portugal "to maintain and defend the integrity and sovereignty of the British territories" can only be deduced from the treaties of the fourteenth century, which is going very far back. The word "sovereignty" is hardly applicable to present circumstances; for we have again and again stated that we do not claim, and are not seeking to establish, our sovereignty over the Transvaal; and, therefore, I could hardly sign a Treaty with Portugal implying the contrary assertion. But my strongest objection to the proposed statement of the obligations of *Portugal* is that it does not offer to Great Britain what Great Britain desires to have. We desire an engagement that, if we are at war with the Transvaal, the Portuguese Government will, on our invitation, declare war with the Transvaal also. This is of importance to us because if we are fighting the Transvaal it is essential that we should stop the supply of arms through Lourenço Marques; and for this purpose it is necessary that Portugal should free herself from the Treaty of 1875 with the Transvaal. A state of war between Portugal and the Transvaal will cancel the Treaty at once. If Portugal does not adopt this, or some other mode of putting an end to the obligation to allow arms to pass through Lourenço Marques, the situation will become very grave, for Great Britain will have no other means of attaining an end which is essential to her except by a blockade.

For these reasons I do not think that the reciprocal form of obligation proposed in your formula is admissible. I have no objection to the obligations of *England* as stated in it except that I prefer the *ipsissima verba* of the "ancient treaties."

They run thus in the Secret Article of the Treaty of 1661 :—

“The King of Great Britain . . . doth promise and oblige himself *to defend and protect all conquests or Colonies belonging to the Crown of Portugal against all his enemies as well future as present.*”

The words I have underlined⁽¹⁾ are the best expression of the Conventional obligation of England towards Portugal, arising out of the Treaty of 1661. But, of course, they are associated with and dependent upon the closing words of the first Article of the Treaty of 1642, which is re-enacted by the Treaty of 1661.

Believe me, &c.

SALISBURY.

⁽¹⁾ Printed in italics in text.

Enclosure 4 in No. 117.

The Marquess of Salisbury to M. de Soveral.

Dear M. de Soveral,

Foreign Office, October 6, 1899.

The Admiralty remind me that, in case of war, a neutral attitude on the part of Portugal may prevent British ships from coaling in Delagoa Bay.

This inconvenience may be prevented if you can insert in the note we propose to sign that Portugal will *not*, in the event of a war between England and the Transvaal, proclaim her neutrality. This would be strictly in accordance with the Treaty of 1642.

Yours very truly,

SALISBURY.

Enclosure 5 in No. 117.

M. de Soveral to the Marquess of Salisbury.

12, Gloucester Place,

Dear Lord Salisbury,

London, October 7, 1899.

I have informed my Government of your new suggestion, and I do not doubt that we will find a way out of this difficulty.

Yours very truly,

L. SOVERAL.

No. 118.

(Secret.)⁽¹⁾

Anglo-Portuguese Secret Declaration, October 14, 1899.⁽²⁾

The Government of Her Majesty the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, Empress of India, and the Government of His Most Faithful Majesty the King of Portugal and the Algarves, considering as of full force and effect the ancient treaties of alliance, amity and guarantee which subsist between the two Crowns, specifically confirm on this occasion Article 1 of the Treaty of the 29th January, 1642, which runs as follows :—

“It is concluded and accorded that there is, and shall be for ever, a good true and firm peace and amity between the most renowned Kings, Charles King

⁽¹⁾ [In archives of Foreign Office, *v. supra* p. ix.]

⁽²⁾ [Brandenburg's statement (*From Bismarck to World War* [1927] 156–7, 176) that the so-called Windsor Treaty was signed during the visit of King Carlos in the spring of 1899 is incorrect.]

of Great Britain and John the Fourth King of Portugal, their heirs and successors, and their Kingdoms, Countries, Dominions, Lands, People, Liegemen, Vassals and Subjects whomsoever, present and to come, of whatsoever condition, dignity or degree they may be, as well by land as by sea and fresh waters, so as the said Vassals and Subjects are each of them to favour the other and to use one another with friendly offices and true affection, and that neither of the said most renowned Kings, their heirs and successors, by himself or by any other, shall do or attempt anything against each other, or their Kingdoms, by land or by sea, nor shall consent nor adhere unto any war, counsel, or Treaty, in prejudice of the other."

They equally confirm the final Article of the Treaty of the 23rd June, 1661, of which the first part runs as follows:—

"Over and above all and singular agreed and concluded in the Treaty of Marriage between the Most Serene and Most Powerful Charles, the Second of that name, King of Great Britain and the Most Virtuous and Serene Lady Catherine, Infanta of Portugal, it is by the Secret Article concluded and accorded, that His Majesty of Great Britain, in regard of the great advantages and increase of dominion he hath purchased by the above-mentioned Treaty of Marriage shall promise and oblige himself, as by this present Article he doth, to defend and protect all conquests or colonies belonging to the Crown of Portugal against all his enemies, as well future as present."

The Government of His Most Faithful Majesty undertakes not to permit, after the declaration of war between Great Britain and the South African Republic, or during the continuance of the war, the importation and passage of arms, and of munitions of war destined for the latter.

The Government of His Most Faithful Majesty will not proclaim neutrality in the war between Great Britain and the South African Republic.

Done, in duplicate, at London, this 14th day of October, 1899.

(L.S.) SALISBURY.

(L.S.) LUIZ DE SOVERAL.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [In the original Treaty preserved in London, the English and Portuguese texts are written in parallel columns, and the signatures of Lord Salisbury and M. de Soveral appear at the bottom of the page, extending across the foot of both texts. The Portuguese text is not reproduced here owing to considerations of space.]

[*EDITORIAL NOTE*.—The extension of the territorial guarantee to Portugal to her Colonies, as well as to the homeland, was denied by Canning (to Chamberlain, the 12th January, 1825, F.O. Austria 120/68, *cp.* Temperley's *Canning* (1925), p. 541). When occasion arose in 1873 for a renewal of the assurances of guarantee to Portugal by Great Britain (F.O. Portugal 179/196, No. 15 of the 19th February; No. 20 of the 27th February, Lord Granville to Sir C. A. Murray: and 179/95 Murray to Granville of the 7th March 1873), Lord Granville gave the guarantee without saying whether he included the Colonies. But the immediate threat was from European Spain to the border of Portugal itself. (*v. supra* pp. 51-2.)

In all probability, however, it was then assumed that the guarantee extended to the Colonies, for a return of *Treaties of Guarantee* was made by command in pursuance of an address of the House of Commons of the 9th August, 1859 (*v. Accounts and Papers* 1859 (Sess. 2), XXXII, p. 593). This contains the Treaties with Portugal, pp. 619-634—including (pp. 626-7) Article XV and the secret article of the Treaty of 1661. It was reprinted, with additions, in 1871 (*v. Accounts and Papers* 1871, LXXII, p. 449). These papers were seen by Mr. (Sir) Edward Hertslet and used by him in the production of a lengthy Memorandum on Guarantees dated the 9th July, 1871 (*v. F.O. General* 358). This was seen and minuted by Lord Granville: "Excellent mem.—as all which Mr. H[ertslet] writes. But I do not think he has quite exhausted what is said about our guarantee to Belgium before last war.—G." (*Note*.—The further Memo. on Belgium, F.O. Belgium 336, Memo. dated the 8th April, 1872, deals with Belgium only.)

The references to the guarantee to Portugal in the Hertslet memorandum are as follows:—

pp. 10-11. "The following Notes with regard to the Guarantee Treaties with Portugal, &c., and the questions which have at times arisen with regard to the guarantee of other territories than these already alluded to as being still in force, may not be found uninteresting, and may be useful for future reference.

King's Advocate, Report, June 7, 1820. To Mr. Ward, March 23. To and from Mr. Oliveira, January 28 and February 21.

The principal stipulation in the Treaties of Alliance between Great Britain and Portugal is contained in the Treaty of 1661, Article XV, in which the King of Great Britain engaged 'that he would take the interest of Portugal and all its dominions to heart, defending the same with his utmost power by sea and land, even as England itself.'

* [Ed.—This is F.O. 97/301.]

State Papers, vol. xiii, p. 1122.

Alison, vol. iv,

p. 84.

Ibid., vol. iv,

p. 88.

A memorandum giving an historical sketch of the Alliance between England and Portugal was prepared by the late Librarian of the office in 1823,* on the invasion of the Peninsula by France; and these Treaties were appealed to by the Portuguese Minister in London in 1826, when he applied for British aid against the aggression from Spain.

A message on the subject was at once delivered by the King to Parliament and a British expedition was sent to Lisbon."

It seems clear therefore that in 1873, as in 1899, the British Government assumed that the guarantee extended to the Colonies as well as to the mainland on the basis of the 1661 Treaty. For the despatch of Canning, in which he repudiated this interpretation, is not quoted and was apparently unknown to Hertslet. It is also significant that the whole question of Guarantees was examined and a Report presented to the House of Commons on the 24th December, 1898, in pursuance of their Address dated the 15th July, 1898 (*v. Accounts and Papers* 1899, (C. 9088), CIX, I).⁽¹⁾ On p. 85 there is a quotation from Granville's despatch to Madrid of the 19th February, 1873, alluded to above. On pp. 80-1 there are quotations from Article XV and the Secret Article of the Treaty of 1661, which extend the guarantee to the Portuguese Colonies. The latter was stressed in the Hertslet Memorandum of 1871 on which Granville relied. These facts were probably known to Lord Salisbury when (*G.P.* XIV, Pt. I. p. 261) he told Count Hatzfeldt on 14th June, 1898, "that England was not only pledged by old treaties, on which they relied in Lisbon, to guarantee Portugal's possessions ('Besitzstand') but that she had the greatest interest in avoiding a break up ('Zusammenbruch')."']

⁽¹⁾ [The paper is, in the main, a reprint of the 1859 P.P. and that of 1871. In each case the clauses in the Treaty of 1661, extending obligations of guarantee to the Colonies of Portugal, are reproduced.]

No. 119.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. MacDonell.

F.O. 179/342.

Tel. Secret.

Foreign Office, October 16, 1899.

An Agreement has been signed between Her Majesty's Government and the Portuguese Minister in London which confirms Article 7 of the Treaty of the 29th January, 1642, and the Final Article (Secret Article) of the Treaty of the 23rd June, 1661.

Under the first-mentioned Article "a good, true, firm Peace and Amity is concluded and accorded for ever between the Kings of Great Britain and Portugal, as well by land as by sea; that neither of the said Kings shall do or attempt anything against each other or their Kingdoms, nor shall consent nor adhere unto any war counsel or treaty in prejudice of the other."⁽¹⁾

Under the second article mentioned: "The King of Great Britain promises and obliges himself to defend and protect all conquests and colonies belonging to the Crown of Portugal against all their enemies, as well future as present."⁽²⁾

Under the present Agreement, the Portuguese Government have undertaken that during the war, they will not allow the importation and passage of arms and munitions of war destined for the South African Republic through their territory, and not to proclaim their neutrality therein.

⁽¹⁾ [*v. Text in B.F.S.P.* I (1841), 473-80. The wording here is slightly altered.]

⁽²⁾ [*v. B.F.S.P.* I, 501. The wording again is slightly altered.]

Sir H. MacDonell to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Africa (War in South Africa) 271.

(No. 79.) Africa.

My Lord,

Lisbon, November 16, 1899.

In my No. 77, Africa, of the 8th instant⁽¹⁾ I complained of the violent tone of the Portuguese press with regard to the campaign in South Africa, and informed your Lordship that I had taken it upon myself to call unofficially the attention of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the unmeasured abuse levelled at certain members of Her Majesty's Government, which far exceeded in offensiveness the license which the Portuguese Government tolerate when dealing with their own authorities.

I had at first hoped that my friendly representations had had the desired effect, but I regret to say that it now appears evident that either the Government is unable to check the excesses complained of or consider it politic to allow the press to go unbridled.

Far be it from me to identify the Portuguese Government with the current of antagonism which runs so freely against England at the present moment throughout Portugal; but the significance of the attitude adopted by the press and I may say by all classes—with the exception of the King and perhaps a few of those who are interested in the foreign policy of this country—should not be overlooked.

The ill-feeling caused throughout the country by the events of 1891 left behind it a sentiment of hostility, which the Republican and reptile press have taken every occasion to turn to account. The educated and governing classes, whilst, at heart, sharing the antipathy of their fellow countrymen are too well aware that politically, financially and commercially, they are absolutely dependent on England's friendship and goodwill.

The most conclusive proof of this may be found in the attitude of every successive Administration. The members of the former Cabinet, who when last in office were initiators of the so-called British policy are now its most rabid opponents, and the present Government cannot too openly uphold a policy which they also at any moment may be called upon to condemn. It is not surprising therefore that they should tolerate the abuse heaped upon Great Britain by the press on information derived from French, German or Spanish sources and supported by the utterances of our Anti-national journals. Irresolution and evasion are the marked characteristics of the foreign policy of Portugal. However much the Government have been moved by necessity to lean upon England, they are now but too conscious, by the many proofs that we have extended to them, that it is the object of Her Majesty's Government to conciliate their good opinion and enlist their sympathies; indeed they look upon England under the present circumstances as a negligible quantity. Having obtained an agreement which secures Portugal against all risk, they now imagine themselves in a position to put their own construction on it, and by a careful observance of a strict neutrality, to put themselves in any event on the winning side.

It stands to reason therefore that if Great Britain were to call upon them within the limits of the existing Agreement to take a more active part in South African affairs they would be virtually lost in public opinion by being forced to disclose its existence. This perhaps accounts for their evasive attitude in the case of the passage of arms, of the landing of adventurers, of the customs facilities, &c.

All this has not escaped the notice of my German colleague, who—guided by his personal sympathies for the Boers, no less than by the inspiration of his Government—has been actively criticising and misrepresenting events in South Africa against us.

The generally accepted notion that the Emperor William might finally make up his mind to more effectually support the Boers had at first unmistakeably influenced

⁽¹⁾ [This was a similar interview in which milder language was used before.]

the views of this Government and was no doubt a powerful factor in directing public opinion as represented by the press.

In view however of recent negotiations between England and Germany, Count Tattenbach has it seems modified his hostile tone and manner but the harm is done and cannot now be repaired.

The French Minister on his side has also not been inactive, and has not allowed an opportunity to slip in turning to account the present feeling of hostility. M. Rouvier has just returned from a short visit to Paris, where he had been called I believe by his Government. From the few words I have exchanged with him he seems prepared to press forward and consolidate French interests, emphasising the fact that France will never admit any encroachments on the Portuguese possession in Delagea Bay on account of Madagascar, and that Great Britain will have to be held responsible for the loss of the enormous French capital invested in the Transvaal.

It appears sufficiently manifest that the arguments of my Dutch, German and French colleagues have produced the desired effect in official quarters, and they consider it politic to court French and German goodwill, in the event of Great Britain calling upon Portugal to join more actively in the conflict.

The present position of the Portuguese Government is clearly defined in an article published in the "Correio da Noite" under the auspices of the President of the Council. This article which is on the lines of what I have stated above, concludes with the following declaration:—

"But the neutrality so jealously maintained by the Portuguese Government has met with the approval of both the contending parties, and so important and effective is it, that were either to endeavour to profit thereby, the fact would offend other Powers, especially Germany, who only the other day declared that if the neutrality of Portugal were violated, it would put an end to German neutrality."

The same journal contains a Berlin telegram announcing the declaration of the Imperial Government that any violation of Portuguese territory will lead to the cessation of German neutrality.

The more moderate tone adopted by the Imperial Government [Press ?] since the arrangement regarding the Samoan Islands has no doubt tended to raise Germany in the estimation of this Government, to the detriment of the influence and prestige of Great Britain—a further proof of the superficial nature of the friendly protestations of Portugal.

I have perhaps dwelt at unnecessary length on Portuguese public opinion, but it represents a feeling which I venture to think, in view of possible contingencies, should not be ignored. Though no Portuguese journal ever crosses the frontier, its readers when not led astray by false telegrams, are influenced in their judgments by that envy hatred and malice, implanted in the nation since the events of 1891, and which the last seven years of ceaseless endeavours to court their friendship have failed to eradicate.

I have, &c.

[H. MacDONELL.]

No. 121.

THE VISIT OF THE BRITISH CHANNEL FLEET AND ITS RESULTS, DECEMBER 1900.

Some of the telegrams, &c., of this period, being of a private nature, appear to be missing, but their tenor can be inferred by references to them elsewhere. On the 2nd December, 1900, the British Minister (Sir H. C. MacDonell), was instructed by Lord Lansdowne in a telegram not extant to announce the impending visit of Admiral Rawson and the Channel Fleet. He was then informed by the Portuguese Minister for Foreign Affairs (Sr. Arroyo) that Don Carlos I, the King of Portugal, would give a State banquet to welcome the squadron and "would so word his speech as to remove all doubt or uncertainty as to the nature of the present relations between

the two countries.”⁽¹⁾ The King spoke in this sense at the banquet, but Admiral Rawson evaded the point “which the King had most at heart, *i.e.*, that his visit was intended to affirm and consolidate the old established alliance.”⁽¹⁾ This caused a remonstrance as will be seen from the following telegram:—

Sir H. MacDonell to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. 179/348. Portugal.

(Private and Secret.)

December 7, 1900.

“From observations made to me by the King last night I gather that His Majesty was a little disappointed that the Admiral did not sufficiently accentuate the alliance and apparently expects me to say more to-morrow. Have I, Y[our] L[ordship’s] authority to do so?”

The telegram of Lord Lansdowne in reply, if sent, is missing, but on the 8th December there was a second banquet to Admiral Rawson at which the British Minister spoke. The President of the Portuguese Ministry referred to the alliance as “not only based on ancient treaties, but [which] has been manifested by events of a very recent and special significance.”⁽²⁾ To this Sir H. MacDonell replied by saying that the alliance “not only took root in the past but is affirmed in the present. As, I may say, war vessels of the present day are in their construction and armament better adapted to the actual requirements than the caravels of the olden times, so has it been necessary to remodel and adapt to the present day the old instruments which were intended to unite us in the past.

“The alliance by which we were formerly bound only requires to be revived and confirmed and that confirmation is conveyed to Portugal by the presence in the Tagus of the Channel Squadron. H[er] M[ajesty’s] Gov[ernment] therefore consider that the treaties which have so long existed between the two countries and which have so repeatedly been referred to as being still binding on us both have been recently strengthened by late events. Consequently the earnest and loyal desire of the Queen’s Gov[ernment] is that the firm and longstanding friendship and alliance should be resolutely maintained.”⁽²⁾

The whole situation is summed up in Sir H. C. MacDonell to Lord Lansdowne, No. 42, Secret, of the 10th December, 1900:—

“... ‘The keen desire—or rather anxiety—which the King and His Govern[ment] have lately manifested to place their relations with Gr[eat] Brit[ain] on a more solid and unequivocal footing has necessarily awakened the suspicion of my Foreign Colleagues, who see a hidden motive in this so-called naval demonstration.

“Some imagine that Her Majesty’s Government has the intention of calling upon Port[ugal] to take a part in the pacification of the South African Rep[ublic], others that Port[ugal] is seeking the protection of Great Brit[ain] against France. After a close study of the reasons which may have prompted the King and his Govern[ment] to draw closer to England, I am induced to believe that certain agencies have been at work to endeavour to persuade the Portuguese that Mr. Kruger may finally succeed in enlisting, in some measure, the sympathy of European Govern[ment]s, sufficient to satisfy the expectation of South African agitators leaving Portugal in an equivocal situation.

“The Portuguese Government have moreover reason to suspect—and, indeed, to know—that greater irregularities have been committed at Lor[enço] Marq[uez] by Mr. Pott and other foreigners, than those which have been brought to their notice. As Allies of Gr[ea]t Brit[ain] they hope to be able to deal more summarily with foreign schemers and agitators.

“In any case it may safely be assumed that, apart from other political consideration and the pressure brought to bear by the King, the object of the Port[uguese] Government in wishing to make public the revival of former treaty engagements between the two countries was to safeguard the integrity of the Portuguese possessions in S[outh] E[ast] Africa; hence the friendly attitude of Portugal in spite of the hostile attacks of the continental press.”

These demonstrations caused the German Government to make an enquiry, as is shown in the following despatch:—

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Viscount Gough.

F.O. 179/351. Portugal.

(No. 289.) Confidential.

December 20, 1900.

“... Baron Eckardstein called on me to-day and asked me whether the German Gov[ernment] was at liberty to say that the recent manifestations at Lisbon did not affect in any way the secret agreement between between this country and Germany as to the Portuguese possessions in

⁽¹⁾ [Sir H. MacDonell to Lord Lansdowne, No. 42, of the 10th December, 1900. F.O. Portugal 179/348.]

⁽²⁾ [Enclosure annexed to Sir H. MacDonell to Lord Lansdowne, No. 41, of the 9th December, 1900.]

S[outh] Africa. The German Chancellor would be questioned on the point in January and would like to be sure of our concurrence in his reply.

"I said that the speech made at Lisbon merely reaffirmed the existence of the old alliance—of which every one was aware—between G[rea]t Britain and Portugal and left the secret agreement exactly where it was before the delivery of the speeches."⁽³⁾

⁽³⁾ [There is a further reference to the Portuguese question in *G.P.*, April 1903, XVIII, 802-3.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—This Anglo-Portuguese Secret Declaration (inaccurately termed "the Windsor Treaty") was not communicated to the German Government till 1913, when a new attempt to delimit spheres of influence in the Portuguese colonies was made. For Hammann's complaints of the treaty and the secrecy in which it was involved see his *Zur Vorgeschichte des Krieges* [1919], pp. 50-1. *G.P.* XXXVII, 98-106, suggests that Prince Lichnowsky and Herr von Jagow misunderstood Sir E. Grey's explanation of the Secret Declaration of 14th October, 1899. They still call it the "Windsor Treaty" and refer even to the Treaty of 1661 as of 1660, with some apparent misunderstanding of its provisions. Herr von Jagow argues (p. 96) that this treaty applied only to the then colonies of Portugal and not to those which she might subsequently acquire, v. also Brandenburg: *Bismarck to World War* [1927], p. 466.]

CHAPTER III.

GREAT BRITAIN, GERMANY AND SAMOA.

I.—THE ANGLO-GERMAN NEGOTIATIONS, AUGUST— DECEMBER 1898.

No. 122.

Sir F. Lascelles to Mr. Balfour.

F.O. Germany (Africa) 1449.

(No. 102.) Africa. Secret.

Sir,

Homburg, D. August 23, 1898.

R. August 29, 1898.

On the 21st instant the Empress Frederick did me the honour to invite me to luncheon at Friedrichshof in order to give me an opportunity of meeting the Emperor, who was on a visit to Her Majesty.

I had a long conversation with His Majesty, the principal points of which I embodied in my secret telegram of yesterday's date,⁽¹⁾ and of which I will now attempt to give a detailed report. . . .⁽²⁾

His Majesty went on to say that colonial expansion had become a necessity for Germany, and that she certainly would obtain the colonies she required. He would infinitely prefer to obtain them by a friendly understanding with England, but if he found it impossible to do so he would be compelled to seek assistance elsewhere, to put himself under obligations to other Powers, which would certainly not be agreeable to him. He still hoped that an arrangement with England might be possible, but, although he was not in possession of the latest details with regard to the negotiations about the Portuguese loan, he feared that there was a prospect of their breaking down, and if this should unfortunately be the case, he would be obliged to reconsider his policy. He had certainly spared no efforts to bring about a good understanding with England, but what had been the result? All his proposals had been rejected in a manner which he would most certainly have strongly resented if any other Power than England had treated him with such scant consideration, and, in his position as German Emperor, it would be impossible for him to continue to submit much longer to such treatment even from England. It was not enough that he should be told that there was a desire for a good understanding or even an alliance. He must have some document to go upon, and so far the action of Her Majesty's Government was not in accordance with the alleged desire for a good understanding. He said that it would really seem that Her Majesty's Government were unable to grasp the situation, and he criticised with some acerbity the action of Her Majesty's Government in China. Even now they did not seem to have realised that Russia had obtained a paramount position at Peking and that the policy of the open door had failed. It was not often that he found himself in agreement with Sir William Harcourt, but that statesman was right when he stated in the recent debate in the House of Commons that the policy of the open door was entirely different from that of "spheres of influence," and that Her Majesty's Government were following a wrong path in attempting to combine the two. In the same way Her Majesty's Government did not seem to perceive that Germany must and would obtain colonial expansion, and that it was to the interest of England to assist her to do so, instead of alienating her by opposing her attempts. His Majesty then referred to the tone of the English press, and, on my observing that for some

(1) [See above, No. 87, p. 68, Tel. No. 4, Africa, of the 22nd August, 1898.]

(2) [Describes German Emperor's complaints of English disregard of German interests.]

months past it had entirely ceased its attacks upon His Majesty, and, indeed, in many cases had assumed a friendly attitude towards Germany, he replied that, although this was so, he had received information from a good source that the violent hostility of the American press was in a great measure due to English suggestion. His Majesty added that the conduct of the President and Government of the United States had been perfectly correct in spite of the violence of the press.

I replied that I had no knowledge of this, but I could only repeat my conviction that a sincere desire for a good understanding existed in England, which in some influential quarters went so far as a wish for an alliance which should be strictly defensive and should only take effect if either party were attacked by two Powers at the same time. His Majesty seemed impressed by this idea, and said it was the first he had heard of it. I then added that at the risk of being indiscreet I could tell His Majesty that in the various conversations which I had had with influential persons in England I had repeated what His Majesty had said previously to me as to his difficulty in entering into negotiations for such a purpose. If they were to fail England would be left in much the same position as before, whereas His Majesty would incur the hostility of his neighbours and render his country liable to invasion on two sides simultaneously, a contingency in which, His Majesty had pointed out, England would be powerless of rendering him any assistance. This consideration had produced a certain effect, but the answer seemed to be that if such an alliance would be brought about, France and Russia combined would not venture to attack so powerful a combination.

His Majesty's manner during the whole of this conversation was most gracious and amiable, but he distinctly gave me to understand that he thought he had reason to complain of the manner in which he had been treated by His Majesty's Government, and that he was greatly disappointed that his efforts to bring about closer relations with England had not been more successful. At the conclusion of the conversation I told His Majesty that I would not fail to report his language to you, and he begged that I would do so. I have since been informed from a private source that His Majesty considered the conversation to have been very satisfactory, and that he felt confident that matters would now be arranged in a manner satisfactory to both countries.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

[ED. NOTE.—This despatch and that of the 21st December are the only documents we have been able to find in the F.O. Archives which contain any reference to the proposals of 1898 for an Anglo-German Alliance. There is a full account from the German archives in G.P. XIV, chap. 91.]

No. 123.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1275.

(No. 339.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. December 5, 1898.

My Lord,

R. December 12, 1898.

The German Ambassador returned here a week ago from prolonged leave of absence, and called upon me on the day of his return.

He began at once to talk about his Sovereign, whom he had seen quite recently, having travelled with His Majesty from the Tyrolese frontier to Munich. It had been a real relief to him, said Count Eulenburg, to learn the change in the Emperor William's plans, for, at this time of year, the sea voyage through the Bay of Biscay was not without risk. The Emperor himself, however, was greatly disappointed in being obliged, for different reasons, to alter his route, as His Majesty was thus unable to avail himself, so I understood Count Eulenburg to say, of the Queen's invitation to him to visit Her Majesty on his way back. My colleague spoke at some length on this point. No one, he said, knew how much the Emperor chafed at having been

prevented of late years by certain circumstances (my colleague did not deem it necessary to specify their character) from seeing the Queen, for whom he entertained the deepest affection and the greatest veneration. The Emperor now hoped that on the occasion of the Queen's customary visit to the south some opportunity might offer for a meeting with Her Majesty.

Count Eulenburg then passed on to the change that had taken place in the general situation since he had last seen me. Our relations had now become so satisfactory that he could frankly tell me how delighted he had been by the attitude we had taken up towards France, and by the success which had attended it. I observed that the position had been more critical than was perhaps generally believed. It seemed to me that we had been on the very verge of war, and we certainly had made formidable preparations for it. In fact, there had been a strong feeling in some quarters that, being so fully prepared, we should do well to let it come to war.

Count Eulenburg, who had evidently followed the crisis with much interest, agreed in thinking it a pity that we had not taken advantage of the excellent opportunity afforded us of giving the French a well-deserved lesson. Our African differences with them were, however, far from being finally settled, and he believed, and in fact hoped, that we would not let them off another time.

This gave me an opening for asking my colleague what chance he thought the French might have had of Russian support. Personally, I allowed myself to doubt their being able to count upon Russia in any Egyptian or other African quarrel with us, but I knew that persons probably much better informed than myself held that Russia would be bound by the terms of her alliance with France to come to the assistance of the latter.

Count Eulenburg replied in a very positive manner that he felt sure there was no formal alliance, and added that he was convinced that Russia would not allow herself to be entangled by France on Egyptian affairs. . . .⁽¹⁾

This view seems to be interesting on account of my German colleague's peculiarly intimate relations with a Sovereign well known to be exceptionally well-informed. His marked *empressement* in coming to this Embassy immediately on his arrival, and the turn he gave to our conversation, likewise seem to me to reflect the impressions left upon him by his recent intercourse with the Emperor, who would naturally have discussed with him the more salient points of a situation which has been so greatly modified during His Majesty's journey to Palestine. In fact, it appears to me not impossible to assume that, under the impression of recent events, his English blood may have asserted itself in the Emperor, and that he may have been sufficiently stirred by our national demonstration and our imposing armaments, directed against a traditional enemy, to dismiss the recollection of those other preparations which he so imprudently called forth himself.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

(1) [Details as to Eastern policy of Russia and France.]

No. 124.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1439.

(No. 338.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. December 21, 1898.

R. December 26, 1898.

On the 19th instant I was honoured by an invitation to dine with the Emperor and Empress at Potsdam, and as the remainder of the party consisted of a few members of the Imperial household, I had an opportunity both before and after

dinner of conversing at length with the Emperor. . . . [Details as to visit to Palestine.]

His Majesty expressed his deep regret at having been obliged, owing to want of time, to give up his intended visit to Egypt, and also that, in consequence of the advanced season and bad weather, he had been unable to visit Gibraltar and return by sea. He had heard that the Queen had intended, if he had touched at an English port, to have invited him to Windsor, and if he had had the slightest inkling of Her Majesty's gracious intention, he would certainly have carried out his original plan.

I ventured to suggest that the critical state of affairs in Europe at the time may perhaps have caused His Majesty to hasten his return.

The Emperor admitted that this was so, and that at the time it looked as if war were imminent between England and France in consequence of the Fashoda question. The French, it was true, had yielded upon that question, but His Majesty considered that the danger was by no means past, and that it was probable that war would break out in the spring. From a military point of view, the moment was well chosen. France was by no means the equal of England at sea, and she would receive no assistance from any other Power. In fact, if the war took place it would be conducted at sea, and the other Powers, even if they desired to assist France, would be unable to do so effectively. The English fleet was immensely superior to all others, and the German and Russian fleets were mere pigmies in comparison. England would, therefore, have an excellent opportunity of settling accounts with France without any fear of the interference of other Powers, and it was doubtful whether so favourable a combination for England would ever again recur.

I told His Majesty that I was aware that a fear was still entertained in some quarters in England that war might break out in the spring, but that I failed to understand the arguments on which this idea was based. Her Majesty's Government had certainly no desire to force a war upon France, and if the latter had shrunk from war now on account of her inferiority to England at sea, I did not see how she could hope to become sufficiently strong to go to war in the spring.

His Majesty was not convinced by my observations, and seemed to be under the impression, which I attempted, though I am afraid in vain, to combat, that England intended to make war, the result of which would inevitably be in her favour, and would enable her to finally settle many questions between the two nations.

The Emperor went on to say that it seemed that all the Latin nations were in a state of decay. Spain had shown in the recent war with the United States how utterly weak and incapable she had become. Portugal was very much in the same state, and Italy but very little better. Now it appeared that France herself was also in a state of decay. England, therefore, with her immense naval superiority, would have no difficulty in destroying the French fleet and taking all her Colonies. There could be no question of an invasion of either country. The English army was too small to attempt to land in France, and the French army, in consequence of the inferiority of their fleet, would not be able to reach England. . . .

His Majesty continued, that if war should break out, which he considered almost certain, he would maintain a strict neutrality as long as the struggle was confined to England and France, but that if any other Power came to the assistance of the latter, he would act in accordance with the agreement he made with me at Friedrichshof in August.

This allusion to the conversation which I had with His Majesty at Friedrichshof, the substance of which I had the honour to report in my despatch No. 102, Africa, Secret, of the 23rd August last, gave me an opportunity of telling His Majesty that I feared he attributed too great importance to what I then said. His Majesty interrupted me, and said that he understood that the idea was that if either of our two countries were to be attacked by two Powers at the same time, the other would come to its assistance, and that he would be prepared to act accordingly.

I replied that His Majesty's recollection was perfectly correct as to the idea which

I said had been entertained in certain quarters in England as a possible basis for an understanding, but that I was speaking without instructions, and had no authority to make an arrangement of any kind.

The Emperor said that he quite understood that I had neither instructions nor authority, but that he considered that the arrangement regarding Africa might very properly be extended to Europe, and that if ever England were in serious danger, he would certainly come to her assistance, as Europe was not conceivable without England, and he believed that under similar circumstances England would do the same by him.

I took an opportunity later in the evening of again reverting to this subject, and quoted an observation, made to me by Count Hatzfeldt, that no formal alliance was necessary between England and Germany, as, if it became advisable for them to take common action, the arrangements could be made in twenty-four hours.

His Majesty expressed his concurrence in this observation, with the alteration of half-an-hour instead of twenty-four hours, and said there was certainly no necessity for a formal alliance. [The rest of the despatch refers to another subject]. . . .

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 125.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1439.

(No. 339.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. December 21, 1898.

R. December 26, 1898.

IN continuation of my immediately preceding despatch of this day's date, I have the honour to report that the Emperor told me, on the evening of the 19th instant, that he had had a conversation with my Russian colleague on the present state of affairs in Europe. Count Osten Sacken had asked whether His Majesty believed in the imminence of a war between England and France, and, on receiving a very decided reply in the affirmative, had expatiated upon the complications which such a war would necessarily entail. The Emperor had, however, pointed out that the war, if it took place, would be purely maritime, and he did not see any reason to fear the complications to which Count Osten Sacken referred. England and France might be left to settle their differences themselves, and, in His Majesty's opinion, the result, considering the immense superiority of England at sea, could not be doubtful. Moreover, the naval forces of Germany and Russia were so small as compared with those of England and France, that their participation in the war could not affect the result.

Count Osten Sacken then asked whether the Emperor intended to remain neutral in the event of a war breaking out. The Emperor replied that he would maintain a strict neutrality, and His Majesty added to me that he was perfectly justified in giving this answer to Count Osten Sacken, as he explained to him that he was convinced that no other Power would interfere.

Count Osten Sacken proceeded to dilate upon the disadvantage it would be to Russia if France were seriously weakened, to which the Emperor replied that he was not aware of the *casus fœderis* between Russia and France. He did not wish to make any indiscreet enquiries, but it seemed to him that it could not amount to much, as France had received no support from Russia in the Fashoda question, and had, therefore, been obliged to yield to the English demands.

Count Osten Sacken explained at some length that Fashoda was a purely African question, and one which did not in any way affect Russia, who had no interests in Africa. The French, moreover, had no reason to complain, as they themselves had

afforded no assistance to Russia when she found herself face to face with England in China. As they had not supported Russia when England took Wei-hai-Wei they had no reason to expect support from her in the matter of Fashoda.

The Emperor continued that he thought he had succeeded in calming down Count Osten Sacken's apprehensions as to the complications which a war between England and France would entail, and he had obtained the conviction that Russia had not the slightest intention of taking part in the war if it should break out.

His Majesty added that he was not surprised to hear from Count Osten Sacken that Russia had no interests in Africa, as he himself had received a similar answer when he had sounded the Russian Government some years ago with regard to Delagoa Bay. It would have been interesting to have ascertained the date on which the Emperor approached the Russian Government on this subject, which, I presume, may have been about three years ago, when His Majesty addressed his celebrated telegram to President Krüger, but I thought it more prudent not to make enquiries with regard to a statement which, perhaps, upon further reflection, His Majesty might have deemed wiser to withhold from a British representative.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

II.—THE MANILA INCIDENT.

No. 126.

Admiralty to Foreign Office.

F.O. Spain 2097.

Admiralty, D. September 29, 1898.

Sir,

R. October 1, 1898.

I am commanded by the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty to transmit, for the information of the Secretary of State, copy of a letter from the Commanding Officer of Her Majesty's ship "*Immortalité*," dated the 14th July, together with copies of its enclosures, reporting friction between the admirals of the United States' squadron and German squadron at Manila.

I am, &c.

EVAN MACGREGOR.

Enclosure 1 in No. 126.

Captain Chichester to Commodore Holland.

Sir,

"Immortalité," Manila, July 14, 1898.

I have the honour to report a slight case of friction which has occurred between Rear-Admiral Dewey and Vice-Admiral Von Diderichs. It arose thus: On the recent arrival off Corregidor of the German cruiser "*Irene*" from Subio Bay she was signalled to from the United States' ship "*Hugh McCulloch*," "*I wish to communicate*," and she was boarded by the flag-lieutenant from the latter ship. What occurred I cannot exactly find out, but apparently the German cruiser for some reason resented being hove-to and boarded, and the German flag-lieutenant was afterwards sent to Admiral Dewey complaining of the action of the flag-lieutenant. This remonstrance induced Admiral Dewey to write Admiral Von Diderichs a letter, of which the attached is the concluding part, and which on the 11th instant Admiral Von Diderichs sent round to the senior officers of the foreign ships in port, with a message saying that he would like to confer with the said officers on the matter. On the morning of the 12th I proceeded on board the "*Kaiser*," and interviewed the German admiral, who asked my opinion on the subject. I informed

him that I was well guided in my conduct in these waters by the instructions contained in the "Memoranda on Blockades" (Foreign Office, September 1894—Admiralty, January 1895), and that I considered that visits from the men-of-war of the blockading force to establish nationality were quite legitimate, but that right of search, as in the case of merchant-ships, was inadmissible and resentable.

The German admiral informed me that he did not know why Admiral Dewey should write what he considered rather a strong letter, unless he was biassed against him on account of some strong articles in the Hong Kong papers *re* German designs in these parts. He remarked that, as a matter of fact, he was sent here because his Second in Command happened to be Prince Henry, otherwise the Second in Command would have been here, and that he had received orders to proceed here from Nagasaki to protect German interests, and since his leaving that port he had not received any orders from home at all.

On my return on board from interviewing him, I received a note from Admiral Dewey which he concluded by saying, "Should you receive a note from the German admiral in relation to one I wrote him please do not make up your mind until he sends you a second one from me on the same subject."

In the afternoon I received a visit from the German flag-lieutenant, who gave me a copy of a letter from Admiral Dewey to his admiral, which I also attach. He asked my opinion on it, at the same time stating that his admiral did not think that that part of Admiral Dewey's letter, which I have underlined in red ink,* was quite clear, and might still be read as implying a right of search. I replied that I considered Admiral Dewey's letter to be clear and moderate in its tone, and that the clause in his letter to which exception was taken could easily be rectified and made clearer on representation, and that my ideas on the subject in general were the same as expressed to the admiral in the morning. I interviewed Admiral Von Diderichs again this day, and concluded, from what he said, that this episode would be brought to a satisfactory close.

I have, &c.

E. CHICHESTER, *Captain*.

Submitted to the Commander-in-chief.

SWINTON C. HOLLAND, *Commodore*.

July 18, 1898.

* Italics in print.

Enclosure 2 in No. 126.

Admiral Dewey to Vice-Admiral Von Diderichs.

(Extract.)

It is not only my right but my duty, while conducting this blockade, to communicate with all vessels, of whatever nationality, entering or wishing to enter this port.

I can see no good reason why any neutral man-of-war should object to such enquiries as are necessary to establish her identity. Her colours alone do not establish her identity, for it is a common ruse of war to hoist false colours.

Enclosure 3 in No. 126.

Admiral Dewey to Vice-Admiral Von Diderichs.

*Flagship "Olympia," Cavite, Philippine Islands,
July 12, 1898.*

Sir,

I am just in receipt of your communication of yesterday.

I hasten to answer, as you have apparently misinterpreted a portion of my letter of the 11th July.

I distinctly disclaim any intention of exercising or claiming the *droit de visite* of neutral vessels of war. What I do claim is the right to communicate with all vessels entering this port, now blockaded by the forces under my command. I must inform such vessels that a blockade exists. It could easily be possible that it was the duty of the picket vessel to notify incoming men-of-war that they could not enter the port, not on account of the blockade, but the intervention of my lines of attack.

As a state of war exists between the United States and Spain, and as the entry into this blockaded port of the vessels of war of a neutral is permitted by the blockading squadron as a matter of international courtesy, *such neutrals should necessarily satisfy the blockading vessels as to their identity*. And I see no good reason why such neutrals should object to such enquiries as are necessary to establish their identity, whether these be made by signal, by hailing, or by the more usual method between men-of-war, visiting, or by other methods usual and common.

As you referred a portion of my last letter to the senior officers of the men-of-war now off the Port of Manila, will you kindly transmit this letter as well.

I have, &c.

GEORGE DEWEY. *Rear-Admiral,
Commanding United States' Naval Force on Asiatic Station.*

III.—THE SAMOA QUESTION.

No. 127.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 318.

(No. 346.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. December 23, 1898.

My Lord,

R. December 26, 1898.

I asked M. de Bülow this afternoon whether there was any foundation for a report that had reached me that the German Government were taking steps to acquire the Caroline Islands.

His Excellency replied in the negative, and then said that he would tell me exactly how the matter stood. Germany had an interest in the Caroline and Marianne Islands, and would view with displeasure their acquisition by any other Power. Should the islands cease to belong to Spain, Germany would certainly take steps to acquire them, and his Excellency trusted that in so doing she might count upon the support of England. She had, however, no wish to appear grasping or to profit by the disasters of Spain, and therefore he had been perfectly correct in saying that the report to which I alluded was unfounded.

His Excellency went on to say that the interest of Germany in these islands was of a sentimental rather than a practical nature. He had made enquiries into the subject, and had ascertained that their commercial value was practically nil; but as Germany had attempted to acquire them ten years ago, the possession of them would give satisfaction to public opinion. His Excellency reminded me that they were situated in the sphere of German influence as defined by our Agreement of 1893, and he did not anticipate any objection on the part of the United States, as they had put forward no claim for them during their recent peace negotiations with Spain.

I took this opportunity of alluding to the remarks which the Emperor had made to me with regard to German colonial expansion as reported in my despatch No. 345 of yesterday's date. His Excellency said that he entirely agreed with His Majesty. The German was not a good coloniser, and had very much to learn from the English. He did not share the Emperor's opinion that the English had not been successful in dealing with barbarous tribes, but certainly the Germans had not, and he trusted

that their attempts in the East, and more especially in China, might be more satisfactory. They had not begun well at Kiao-chau, and Prince Henry had reported unfavourably with regard to the action of the officials, and had shown the necessity for a change of system.

His Excellency continued that he was convinced of one thing, viz., that Germany would never succeed in colonial enterprise unless she secured the assistance and goodwill of England. It was out of the question that Germany should ever dream of rivalling England as a Colonial Power, but she would not succeed in a far humbler way unless she not only adopted English methods, such as freedom of trade and the open door, but also secured the support and good-will of the Greater Power. The commercial classes in Germany had become alive to the fact that it was to their interest to act together with England in the Far East, and he was happy to say that the English merchants had reciprocated, and the officials were now beginning to learn the same lesson. Count Hatzfeldt had reported, on his return to London, that the relations between the two countries were on a satisfactory footing, and his Excellency was convinced that they would become better still. His Excellency considered that the arrangement concluded in August with regard to Africa might be considered most satisfactory from two points of view :—

1. It removed from discussion the question of Delagoa Bay, which threatened to embitter the relations between the two countries, and to cause an estrangement which it might take thirty or forty years to overcome; and it was evident to any one who studied the question and realised the naval power of England, that Delagoa Bay must necessarily eventually fall to her.

2. That it enabled the two countries to act together in other parts of the world to their mutual advantage.

It should also be remembered that it was some advantage to England to be able, in return for her assistance in German colonial enterprise, to count upon the support of Germany in the event of European complications.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 128.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 326.

(No. 14.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. January 20, 1899.

R. January 23, 1899.

During the visit which the Emperor paid me this morning, the conversation turned upon the recent disturbances in Samoa.⁽¹⁾ His Majesty did not think they would

⁽¹⁾ [After a civil war in Samoa in 1887–88, arising from a disputed succession, a Convention was signed at Berlin on the 14th June, 1889. Great Britain, Germany and the United States, the three Powers whose nationals had settled in the islands, inaugurated a joint control, of which the chief organs were a Chief Justice and a President of the Municipality of Apia. Fresh troubles began with the death of King Malietoa on the 22nd August, 1898. Mataafa, the exiled Pretender, returned and was recognised as King by the majority of the Chiefs; but the Chief Justice, Chambers, to whom the final decision had been assigned by the Treaty of 1889, declared the election invalid, and appointed Malietoa Tanu, the youthful son of the late ruler. The strife of the native factions was aggravated by disagreement among the representatives of the Powers, Dr. Raffel, the German President of Apia Municipality, and Dr. Rose, the German Consul, championing Mataafa, while the British and American officials took the other side. A civil war broke out, in which Mataafa triumphed, and the Consuls appointed a provisional Government with Mataafa as its nominal head. The Chief Justice refused to recognise its authority, whereupon Dr. Raffel, as chief of the new body, closed the Supreme Court. The British Consul declared

lead to any serious complication, but the experiment of governing the islands by the Representatives of the three Powers had not proved a success, and His Majesty asked whether the time had not come for a definitive settlement of the question by the partition of the islands between England, Germany, and the United States.

I subsequently called upon Baron von Richthofen, who said that nothing could give him greater pleasure than a definitive solution of the question, as suggested by the Emperor. In fact, the whole of Samoa was not worth the money spent upon telegrams to and from Apia. . . . [Details.]

Later in the evening I met M. de Bülow at a dinner party, at which the Emperor and Empress were present.

His Excellency thought that the first thing to be done was to calm the effervescence which had arisen. He had telegraphed fully to Count Hatzfeldt and to the German Ambassador in Washington, and he hoped that the instructions which the Representatives of the three Powers might receive would produce the desired result. He doubted whether the moment was opportune for raising the question of the partition of the islands, which he considered would be eventually the most satisfactory solution of the question, and he thought that for the moment our efforts should be directed to restoring order in Samoa.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 129.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1469.

(No. 18.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. January 20, 1899.

My Lord,

R. January 23, 1899.

When the Emperor left Her Majesty's Embassy this morning a considerable crowd had collected in the street, who cheered His Majesty as he entered his carriage. I attributed no importance to this demonstration, which I thought merely indicated His Majesty's popularity; but this evening His Majesty told me that it was the first time that he had met with such an ovation on leaving a foreign Embassy, and he begged me to report it to your Lordship as a sign of the satisfaction which the people of Berlin feel at the friendly relations which now exist between the two countries.

this action contrary to the Treaty, and, in agreement with the American Consul, forcibly reopened it. The United States Government now despatched a squadron, whose Commander on the 11th March declared both the Provisional Government and Mataafa deposed, and the Supreme Court open. Despite the protest of the German Consul, the Provisional Government was evicted, and its offices were occupied by British and American marines on the 13th March. On the 15th March, British and American ships bombarded Apia and damaged the German Consulate. On the 23rd March Malietoa Tanu was crowned King. On the 1st April, however, the Mataafa party defeated their opponents near Apia. The fighting lasted through April, British and American vessels taking occasional part in the fray. On the 4th April the three Powers agreed to send a Joint Commission to settle the questions at issue. The three Commissioners reached Apia on the 13th May, confirmed the action of the Chief Justice in the choice of Malietoa Tanu, but persuaded the King to resign. Power was placed in the hands of the Consuls; the natives were disarmed; a new Chief Justice was appointed; and on the 18th July the Commissioners left the islands, to which tranquillity had returned. The German case is presented in great detail in *G.P. XIV*, Pt. II, ch. 96.]

The Emperor said that he had no doubt that the friendly tone recently adopted by the English press—and he referred more especially to an article in the “Times” of some days ago—had produced an excellent effect, and had been the cause of the demonstration of which he had been the object on leaving my house.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 130.

Colonial Office to Foreign Office.

F.O. Pacific Islands 326.

Confidential.

Sir,

Downing Street, January 24, 1899.

. . [Details] . . 3. I am to take this opportunity of requesting you to remind the Marquess of Salisbury of the strong and legitimate feeling which exists in the Australasian Colonies against allowing the control of Samoa to pass into the hands of a foreign Power. owing to its position directly in the track of steamers from Australia and New Zealand to North America, or to the Central American Canal.

I am, &c.

H. BERTRAM COX.

No. 131.

Sir J. Pauncefote to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 326.

Tel. (No. 10.) Confidential.

Samoa.

Washington, D. January 27, 1899.

R. 10 P.M.

Secretary of State has shown me confidentially drafts of a note he addressed to the German Ambassador and of a despatch to the United States Ambassador at Berlin reviewing the recent occurrences so far as at present ascertained by the United States Government.

Despatch, copy of which will be communicated to your Lordship by Mr. White in London is a scathing indictment against German officials implicated in disorders and their prompt dismissal is urged. . . [Details as to despatch] . .

Your Lordship will be asked by Mr. White to support the views of the United States Government and their attitude in respect of the events in question. . . .

No. 132.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Pacific Islands 328.

(No. 38.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 2, 1899.

(¹). . . . Count Hatzfeldt has expressed more than once his belief that no issue could be found from the confusion that now exists, except by either dividing the islands among the three Governments, or by buying out Germany with some compensation elsewhere. I have always expressed considerable

(¹) Details as to recent events in Samoa.

doubt as to whether either of these alternatives was practicable. The difficulty in the way of any division of the islands is that it would only take place by leaving Tutuila with Pago Pago to America, where the United States already have some Treaty rights; by giving Upolu and Apia, the capital, to Germany, in regard to the predominance of German interests in that locality, and by leaving to England the third island, which is of very inferior value. I thought, therefore, an agreement in this direction was not probable. The idea of compensating Germany might be an arrangement that would have some attractions for the other two Powers, if we had any means of providing the compensation that would be required; but I did not see how it could be furnished either by America or by Great Britain. His Excellency has always shown an eagerness upon this question for which I am not able entirely to account.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 133.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 329.

(No. 90.)

Berlin, D. March 24, 1899.

My Lord,

R. March 27, 1899.

. . . . M. de Bülow reverted to this subject this afternoon at his Diplomatic reception, and he begged me to impress upon your Lordship that it was a matter of the utmost indifference to him whether Mataafa or Malietoa, or any other Samoan Chief, were King of Samoa; but he felt strongly that the Samoan question should not be allowed to assume proportions which might cause a misunderstanding between our two countries, and thus tend to impair the excellent relations which now existed with regard to all other points.

In his Excellency's opinion, the whole group of islands was of very small value, but unfortunately public opinion in Germany had been led to believe that they were of importance to Germany; and his Excellency repeated what he had said to me on a previous occasion, that it was towards Samoa that Germany had first looked when she began colonising, and since then the loss of German ships and lives had excited interest in the minds of the German public. These might be sentimental grievances, but they had none the less to be taken into account.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 134.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Pacific Islands 329.

(No. 67.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 31, 1899.

The German Ambassador called at the Foreign Office to-day to express on behalf of his Government the hope that as a proof of good-will Her Majesty's Government would at once accept the proposal to send special Commissioners to Samoa made by the United States Government, and that they would send instructions accordingly to Her Majesty's Ambassador at Washington.

Count Hatzfeldt also urged that as time was of much importance, instructions should be sent by the nearest available ship of war to Consul Maxse to use his best efforts for conciliation, and that he should further be informed that Her Majesty's Government maintain the Final Act of Berlin, which precludes separate control of any Power over the island, that they cannot approve actions or events in contravention of that principle, and that all parties, including natives, should understand that for a definitive settlement they must await agreement between the Powers and the arrival of the Special Commissioners.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

No. 135.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.⁽¹⁾

F.O. Pacific Islands 329.

(No. 97.) Confidential.

My Lord.

Berlin, D. March 31. 1899.

R. April 3. 1899.

Baron von Richthofen told me this afternoon, in the course of a long conversation, the principal points of which I had the honour to report to your Lordship in my telegram No. 6 of this day's date, that M. de Bülow, who is absent from Berlin, had instructed him by telegraph to call my attention to the latest news from Samoa. He had, therefore, sent me word that he proposed to call upon me last night, but on receiving a summons to wait upon the Emperor this morning he had thought it better to defer his visit until he should have received His Majesty's commands. He added that he was about to call upon me when I arrived at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The Emperor, Baron von Richthofen said, was greatly agitated by the news from Samoa, and was indignant that, in what seemed like a conflict between the German and United States authorities in Samoa, the English should have taken the part of the latter. It was not only the Emperor who would resent this action of the English naval officers, but, as he had frequently pointed out to me before, the Samoan question has always attracted great attention in Germany, and German public opinion has been led to believe that German interests in Samoa greatly exceed those of the other two Powers. For these and other reason to which I have had the honour to call your Lordship's attention in previous despatches, the news that the English have sided with the Americans against the Germans in Samoa will cause an outcry in the German press, which will be eagerly taken advantage of by those opposed to an Anglo-German understanding, which might tend to imperil the good relations which had recently been established between our two countries, and which, he was happy to think, he had to some extent been instrumental in bringing about. . . .

Baron von Richthofen went on to say that the German Government had done everything in their power to arrive at a solution of the question, but that their endeavours had met with little success. When the troubles first arose, the German Government had suggested the partition of the islands. Her Majesty's Government had refused, and the United States Government had not replied at all. Then the German Government proposed that all the officials who had been mixed up in the recent events should be replaced by others. Again Her Majesty's Government refused, and again the United States Government sent no reply. Now the German Government had adopted a suggestion made by Her Majesty's Ambassador at Washington that a High Commission should be sent to Samoa. The United States had accepted with apparent alacrity, but no reply had been received from Her Majesty's Government. He understood that the delay was due to your Lordship's absence from England, and he trusted that it would not be prolonged. In fact, he hoped it might arrive in time for him to

⁽¹⁾ Cf. G.P. XIV, p. 593.

make some announcement in the evening papers to-morrow, which might tend to calm public opinion, and he thought it a fortunate circumstance that, to-day being Good Friday, no newspapers had been published.

Baron von Richthofen's language was so earnest, and his fear of the bad effect which recent events in Samoa might have upon the relations between the two countries seemed so sincere, that I thought it my duty, in my telegram No. 6 of to-day's date, to suggest that the extreme importance which the Emperor and the German public attach to the Samoan question did not appear to be fully realised in England.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 136.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Berlin, April 2, 1899.

F.O. Pacific Islands 329.

D. 5.15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 8.)

R. 5.30 P.M.

Secret. My telegram No. 7. Baron Richthofen tells me privately that the Emperor is highly incensed about the Samoa question, which he regards as a personal matter, and complains that he has been treated with less courtesy by Her Majesty's Government than by the United States Government. The President of the United States had expressed his surprise and regret at the reported collision at Apia, but no such friendly message had reached him from the Queen or Her Majesty's Government.

No. 137.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 329.

(No. 104.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. April 6, 1899.

R. April 10, 1899.

. . . . On the evening of the same day I had the long conversation with M. de Bülow, the principal points of which I had the honour to report in my telegram No. 10, which, in accordance with instructions received from your Lordship's Office, I repeated to your Lordship. His Excellency said that, without in any way wishing to indulge in threats, he could not conceal from me that the recent events in Samoa threatened to very seriously impair the good relations which had so recently been established between our two countries. There were many people in Germany, especially amongst the Colonial party, who were opposed to his policy of a good understanding with England, and their hands would be considerably strengthened if they could point out that the suspicions they entertained were justified by facts. There had undoubtedly been violations of the Berlin Act; the bombardment by British and American ships would seem to give some colour to the suspicion that England and America were trying to override that Act and drive Germany out of Samoa.

I protested somewhat warmly against this suspicion, which I considered perfectly unjustified, and I observed of course that Her Majesty's Government would observe the Berlin Act as long as it remained in force. His Excellency had more than once spoken to me of the objection of Germany to be subjected to a majority ("d'être majorisé"), and in a conversation which I had had with Baron von Richthofen I had expressed my regret that the German Consul-General had not seen his way to agree with his

colleagues. Baron von Richthofen had expressed equal regret that the English and American Consuls had not seen their way to agree with Dr. Rose, to which I replied that this would have been tantamount to subjecting England and the United States to a minority, and if Germany objected "d'être majorisé." England and America might fairly object "d'être minorisé."

M. de Bülow replied that he could assure me that there was no such desire on the part of the German Government, but his present object was to arrive at a solution of the question, and to remove, if possible, the suspicion which was undoubtedly entertained in Germany. Could your Lordship give him the assurance that Her Majesty's Government would observe the provisions of the Berlin Act until it should have been modified by the consent of the three Powers?

I told M. de Bülow that I considered that your Lordship would be justified in resenting such a demand, and in feeling indignant that Her Majesty's Government should be suspected of wishing to violate their Treaty engagements.

M. de Bülow went on to say that he wished to restore mutual confidence, without which the good understanding which he was convinced was of immense advantage to our two countries, could not be maintained. As far as Germany was concerned, that confidence had been somewhat severely shaken, and a declaration such as he had suggested would greatly assist him in his endeavour. I gathered also, although his Excellency did not expressly say so, that he was anxious to obtain such a declaration in order to be able to reply to the attacks, which he anticipates will be made upon him when the Reichstag reassembles.

Before leaving, I told M. de Bülow that I had done my best, by repeating to the best of my ability to your Lordship the arguments put forward by his Excellency and Baron von Richthofen, to impress upon your Lordship the fact that the question of Samoa was one to which very great importance was attached in Germany. I could not do more than testify to the fact, as I myself found it difficult to assign any reasonable cause for it.

M. de Bülow thanked me warmly, and said that it was possible that the strong feeling on the subject in German public opinion might perhaps be exaggerated and of a sentimental character; but it undoubtedly existed, and had to be taken into account, and he considered that I had rendered a service to both countries in bringing this fact clearly to your Lordship's notice.

On the night of the 4th instant I received your Lordship's telegram No. 1, and at once sent the paraphrase, of which I have the honour to enclose a copy, to Baron von Richthofen, with a private note, in which I begged him to communicate it to M. de Bülow and to regard it as a verbal communication.

I called yesterday afternoon again on Baron von Richthofen, who, however, had not seen M. de Bülow, and could not therefore tell me what impression your Lordship's telegram had made upon him. Personally, he regretted your Lordship's allusion to Herr Rose, to which he thought it would be necessary for the German Government to reply. If this allusion had been omitted the telegram would have been perfectly satisfactory.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

Enclosure in No. 137.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Pacific Islands 329.

Tel. (No. 1.) P.

Beaulieu, April 4, 1899.

You are authorised to declare to the Minister for Foreign Affairs that the provisions of the Berlin Act will be observed by Her Majesty's Government until it shall have been modified by the consent of the Signatory Powers.

You should reciprocate the remarkable frankness with which the Minister for Foreign Affairs has spoken to you by informing his Excellency that an impression exists both in Samoa and England that Germany has been attempting to force America and England out of Samoa, and such a supposition would alone seem to explain the unjustifiable action and extravagant language of the German Consul-General. We have been much perplexed by the policy of the German Government in supporting Herr Rose.

A decision by majority can, of course, only be adopted in any case by the concurrence of the three Powers. I do not, however, think that without it any advantage can under existing circumstances be derived from a Joint Report, either as regards the recent history of Samoa, or the policy which it may be desirable to pursue in future; because it would always be in the power of one of the Commissioners, in a Joint Report in which unanimity is required, to silence the two others on any topic on which he may differ in opinion from them.

No. 138.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Berlin, April 8, 1899.

F.O. Pacific Islands 329.

Tel. (No. 12.)

D. 4.35 P.M.

R. 5.10 P.M.

M. de Bülow begged me to call on him this morning, and strongly urged me to press on you the importance of immediate appointment of High Commission for Samoa. The delay is increasing the suspicion which unfortunately exists that England wants to gain time in order to inflict further limitation on Germany, and a Reuter's telegram gives details of the landing of British and American troops, and the proclamation of Tanu as King cannot fail to augment the irritation which is felt both by the Emperor and by public opinion. The Commission ought to have no difficulty in unanimously arriving at a *modus vivendi*.

[ED. NOTE.—Correspondence respecting the Affairs of Samoa (Report of the Joint Commission), April–July 1899 (presented to Parliament, October 1899), *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. XCII, p. 125 *et seq.* This contains the text of the Final Act of Samoa, signed at Berlin, June 14, 1899, Ratifications deposited at Berlin, April 12, 1890. This Act is referred to in despatch immediately following (No. 139).]

No. 139.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Pacific Islands 330.

(No. 73.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 25, 1899.

The German Ambassador has, in his observations on the difficulties which have arisen in Samoa, stated more than once and especially in conversation on the 12th instant, that it was expressly provided in the Final Act of the Conference at Berlin that no military or naval action could be taken in the islands by any of the three Powers except by joint counsel of all.

In this contention Count Hatzfeldt, no doubt, referred to the first paragraph of Article I of the Final Act, which declares that the Islands of Samoa are neutral territory, that the three Powers recognise the independence of the Samoan Government and the free right of the natives to elect their Chief or King, and choose their

form of Government according to their own laws and customs, and that none of the Powers shall exercise any separate control over the islands or the government thereof.

In accordance with these principles, when ships of war were sent to Samoa in 1892, for the purpose of securing, if necessary, obedience to the decisions of the Supreme Court, it was agreed that action by these vessels for the enforcement of the sentences of the Court should only take place on the joint request of the Representatives of the three Powers.

But Her Majesty's Government, while quite admitting this limitation as regards the exercise of force for the purpose of political control, have never understood, and cannot admit, that the stipulations of the Final Act debar the Contracting Parties from such action as may be necessary for the safety of their respective subjects and the security of their property. This is an essential right and duty which cannot, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, be considered to be abrogated or limited by the Agreement to maintain the independence and neutrality of Samoa.

Her Majesty's Government do not doubt that the German Government will concur in this view, for it has been urged by them on a previous occasion in justification of the proceedings of their own naval officers. Your Excellency will find in the correspondence of 1888-89, laid before Parliament ("Samoa No. 1: 1889"), that in reply to a representation made by Sir E. Malet as to the military operations undertaken in the harbour of Apia by a boat of the Imperial gun-boat "Adler," Count Hatzfeldt replied in a note dated the 11th February, 1889, that these operations were necessary to defend German property from an attack made upon it by a canoe with fifty Samoan warriors belonging to the party of Mataafa. He added that the Imperial Consul was not authorised to restrict the German vessels of war in their freedom of action when they had to protect German property; and it could not, therefore, be said that any violation of neutrality had occurred through the German operations. As the recent conflicts between the British and United States forces and the natives appear from such accounts as have reached me to have followed on attacks made upon the persons and property of British subjects and United States citizens, and Count Hatzfeldt appeared disposed to contend that no measures for protection or redress could be taken in such cases without the consent of the German Consul-General, I think it necessary to state that this is a contention which Her Majesty's Government cannot admit.

I should wish you to read this despatch to the German Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

No. 140.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 330.

(No. 130.)

My Lord,

Berlin, D. April 28, 1899.

R. May 1, 1899.

I called by appointment this afternoon upon M. de Bülow, and read to him your Lordship's despatch No. 73 of the 25th instant on the subject of the contention which Count Hatzfeldt had put forward, that no measures could be taken in Samoa by the British and United States naval forces for the protection of the lives and property of British subjects or United States citizens without the consent of the German Consul-General.

M. de Bülow listened attentively while I read your Lordship's despatch, and when I came to that part in which allusion is made to the explanations given by Count Hatzfeldt in his note of the 11th February, 1889, of the military operations undertaken in the harbour of Apia by a boat of the Imperial gun-boat "Adler," observed that those operations took place before the conclusion of the Berlin Act.

I continued reading the despatch, and when I had finished observed that if the German operations were not to be considered a violation of neutrality, it was evident that the English and United States operations, which we believe were taken in consequence of attacks made on the persons and property of British subjects and United States citizens, could not be considered as a violation of the Berlin Act, which provides that neither of the Powers shall exercise any separate control over the islands or the Government thereof.

M. de Bülow took careful note of the views expressed in your Lordship's despatch, and said he would give the question his best attention. He also expressed the sincere hope that the Commission, now on the way to Samoa, would restore peace in the islands, and propose some satisfactory solution of the question. He again referred to the selection he had made of Baron Speck von Sternburg as German Commissioner, on account of his connection with England and his long residence in the United States, and he could assure me that the instructions which he had given to Baron Speck von Sternburg were of the most conciliatory nature.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 141.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1470.

(No. 152.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. May 26, 1899.

My Lord,

R. May 29, 1899.

On the evening of the 24th instant, the Emperor gave the usual banquet in honour of the Queen's Birthday, to which all the members of Her Majesty's Embassy now in Berlin had the honour of being invited. . . .

At dinner, I had the honour of being seated beside His Majesty, who, as always, was amiable and polite to me personally, but took no pains to conceal his irritation towards England on account of Samoa. He began by observing that the uniform of an English admiral, which he had donned for the occasion, might perhaps remind me of a brave English sailor named Sturdee, to which I replied at once that from the reports which I had seen, I gathered that Captain Sturdee was an energetic officer, and that I hoped that as the commission must almost have arrived in Samoa by this time, a satisfactory solution of the question might shortly be expected.

The Emperor replied that things ought never to have been allowed to come to that point, and evidently attributed the whole blame to the action of the English officials. I therefore ventured to observe that it was natural that His Majesty should form his opinion from the reports of his Consul-General, but it was equally natural that Her Majesty's Government should be guided by the reports of their Consul on the spot, and the conflict of evidence was so strong that it would be necessary to await the result of the enquiry which the Commission would have to make, before forming a definitive judgment.

The Emperor replied with some warmth that the facts were there to speak for themselves. The Germans had taken no part in the bombardment which the English and American ships had kept up for three weeks, to the damage of German property. I could have no idea of the irritation which this had caused in Germany, more especially in the south, from whence he had just returned, and where the indignation was felt equally by the people and the Princes. It was, however, all of a piece with the policy which Her Majesty's Government seemed to have adopted, viz., to treat Germany as a nonentity. He knew that England was powerful and Germany weak at sea, and therefore the former could act with impunity, but the time would come when

even England would have to consider the German fleet as an important factor, and he only hoped that it would not be too late, and that Germany would not by that time have formed other combinations which would certainly not be agreeable to England, but which she would have brought upon herself by the constant disregard and contempt with which she treated German interests. The feeling in Germany against England was so bitter that there could be no question of his visiting Cowes this year, and all this was the more disappointing as the relations between the two countries at the beginning of the year had become so good. Last year we had succeeded in concluding an Agreement with regard to Africa which he would faithfully observe. Then came Mr. Rhodes' visit to Berlin which had created an excellent impression, and now all the good that had been done was completely destroyed by our conduct in Samoa. He had constantly laboured to bring about a good understanding with England, but whenever he seemed to be on the point of succeeding, some incident had occurred to frustrate his desires. He compared himself to Sisyphus, and said that it was most discouraging, when he really thought he had got the stone to the top of the hill, to see it roll down to the bottom.

During the course of the evening His Majesty honoured me with further conversation, in which he alluded to the large sums of money which had been sent from England to bribe the American press to attack Germany. I replied that I had no knowledge of this, but even if it were the case, I did not suppose that His Majesty really considered that Her Majesty's Government were responsible. The Emperor observed that Her Majesty's Government must have known of it and had taken no steps to counteract this evil influence which, however, had not prevailed, as the relations between Germany and the United States had now been put on a satisfactory footing. All this was known in Germany and increased the ill-feeling towards England, and a long time would elapse, and many things would have to be changed, before he could hope to be again cheered on leaving the English Embassy, a fact which I might remember had given him so much pleasure.

His Majesty referred in terms of praise to Mr. Cecil Rhodes, who had been acting strenuously on his behalf in England. He also expressed regret that more leading Englishmen did not visit Berlin. They would then perhaps find that Germany was not quite the despicable country they had been taught to believe, and he was looking forward to the pleasure of seeing many of my fellow-countrymen during the yacht-racing week at Kiel.

In the course of the conversation I ventured to ask His Majesty whether I was to consider that he included Her Majesty's Ambassador in the general condemnation which he had passed on England, to which he replied by quoting a verse from Schiller: "Ich weiss den Mann von seinem Amt zu scheiden."

On taking leave of His Majesty I asked whether he had any orders for England, as I hoped to be there before long. His Majesty assumed his jocose manner and said: "Yes. Tell your people to behave themselves properly," and then related an anecdote of Dean Liddell who, on reproving an offending undergraduate, concluded his admonition with the words: "Not only have you imperilled your immortal soul, but you have also incurred my serious displeasure."

The impression which the Emperor's language left upon my mind is that His Majesty wished to speak more in sorrow than in anger, but somehow allowed the latter sentiment to become predominant, and that His Majesty's apologue, though spoken in jest, is not far from a correct description of his present frame of mind, and should not be considered entirely as a joke.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1470.

(No. 154.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. May 26. 1899.

I had an opportunity to-night of a short conversation with the Chancellor, whom I met at an evening party. I told him that I had had an interesting conversation with the Emperor on the 24th, and he replied that he had heard that the conversation had been "un peu vive," and he presumed it had some reference to the Queen. I said that this was not the case, and that the Emperor had given me to understand that the Samoan question was the cause of His Majesty's discontent. This I thought very unfair.

Prince Hohenlohe interrupted me by saying that the Germans believed that we had treated them unfairly in Samoa, to which I replied that I quite understood that the reports of the German Consul-General would certainly justify that impression, but the reports of the English Consul put matters in quite another light, and I thought it would be impossible to reconcile this strong conflict of evidence until the Commission should have concluded its enquiry.

Prince Hohenlohe then turned the conversation by saying that he had addressed a letter to the Queen on the occasion of Her Majesty's Birthday. He spoke of Her Majesty with the greatest admiration. . . .

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Pacific Islands 331.

(No. 117.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 15, 1899.

Yesterday the German Ambassador spoke to me about Samoa. He dwelt much on the strong feeling of antagonism to Great Britain which was springing up all over Germany, produced by the vehement indignation which this incident had aroused. I replied that the indignation appeared to me wholly groundless; because the trouble in Samoa had in no degree been the work of our people, and we had taken precisely the measures for remedying it, which we had been requested to take by the German Government.

His Excellency then turned to the subject of indemnities for injuries committed upon German subjects and their property. I said that according to our information no such injuries had been committed, but I was quite willing that any allegations upon this subject should be investigated, and that if injuries had been committed they should be redressed. But I called his attention more than once to the necessity of showing that the damage done, if any, was due to action on the part of our officers which was unjustifiable, and ought not to have been taken. Otherwise it could not be looked on as an injury.

His Excellency concurred in this view, and after some further conversation, we agreed that if it should be shown that by the action of British officers German property in Samoa has been injured, Her Majesty's Government would take into consideration the claims of German subjects for compensation, it being understood that a corresponding obligation attaches to the German Government.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 144.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Pacific Islands 332.

(No. 130 A.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, July 12, 1899.

The German Ambassador called upon me to-day, and in the course of our conversation his Excellency touched upon our Agreement with regard to compensation for losses in Samoa, and suggested that the question might eventually be referred to the King of Sweden and Norway for arbitration.

To this suggestion I at once assented.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 145.

Mr. Eliot to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 324.

(No. 28.) Confidential.

My Lord,

*Apia, Samoa, D. July 23, 1899.**R. September 7, 1899.*

In obedience to the instructions contained in your Lordship's despatch No. 2 of the 13th April, I have the honour to enclose herewith a Report on the immediate causes which have led to the recent unfortunate events in Samoa. I have divided it into three parts: the first explaining Samoan political ideas, and knowledge of which is necessary to understand the contest about the Kingship; the second treating of the events from Mataafa's return to the establishment of the Provisional Government; the third dealing with the questions raised by that Government, and by the action of Admiral Kautz.

Your Lordship states that it is especially important to ascertain how far what has occurred is due in my judgment to the faulty character of the arrangements sanctioned by the Final Act of Berlin, and how far to any errors in the application of those arrangements by any persons having authority in the islands at the time. Taking the facts as stated in my Report as a basis, I have the honour to reply as follows:—

- (a.) The first error and original cause of all the disturbances was the return of Mataafa at a critical period without any clear understanding as to his position. His past showed that he was one of the most influential, ambitious and restless men in Samoa, and, unless the Powers were agreed that he might be King, he should not have been allowed to return until some other King was elected.
- (b.) The second cause of the disturbances was the action of M. Rose, the German Consul-General, and Dr. Raffel, the President of the Municipal Council. They quite unnecessarily made the Kingship a party question, refused to accept a legal decision or to recognise the subsequent acts of the Judge who made that decision and on repeated occasions encouraged the party of Mataafa to resist by armed force when they were inclined to submit. While admitting that there were mistakes on both sides, I do not think that serious accusations of this character can be made against Mr. Maxse or any other British official.
- (c.) Thirdly, I should say that the Final Act of Berlin is to blame, inasmuch as it provides no one European authority in Samoa who can enforce its provisions. The nearest approach to such an authority is the Chief Justice, but he cannot secure obedience to his decisions. Now after the

death of Malietoa Laupepa either there was or there was not something which could be described as a Government. If nothing of the kind legally existed the Act of Berlin is at fault. If such a Government did exist it must have consisted, in my opinion, of the Councillors and Ministers of the deceased King. If so, the President of the Municipal Council ought to have acted as their chief executive officer, and have arranged with them for the decision of the question of the Kingship by the Chief Justice.

(d.) Fourthly, matters were complicated by Consular interference, which seems to me to be "an error in the application of the arrangements" of the Act of Berlin. That Act provides for the Consular Board exercising certain special functions, but it does not entrust it with the general supervision of the Government. I cannot see that any Consul had a right to express an official opinion as to how the question of the Kingship should be decided, or as to the legality of the decision rendered, or to appoint a Provisional Government. The Consuls gradually assumed the character of a Board of General Control, their duties were not defined in any international instrument, and the three of them were never in accord.

(e.) In other despatches which I have had the honour to address to your Lordship I have dwelt on other subsidiary causes of the disturbances. Such are the intense national feelings prevailing between the foreign colonies in Apia, the faulty Customs Regulations which permit the natives to obtain arms and ammunition, and the unsuitable arrangements made for submitting the question of the Kingship to the decision of the Chief Justice. As the Commission have proposed to abolish the Kingship I need not discuss this matter further, but it is clear to me that, if the Chief Justice's decision appointing Tanu King had been upheld permanently, peace would not have been secured. As soon as such restraints as the presence of a Special Commission and of an unusual number of men-of-war had been removed, there would have been, as often before in Samoan history, a legal Government at Mulinuu, and a rebel Government elsewhere. And yet I think Tanu was elected according to the laws and customs of Samoa.

I have, &c.

C. N. E. ELIOT.

No. 146.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Pacific Islands 332.

(No. 172.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 15, 1899.

On several recent occasions Count Hatzfeldt has pressed me very earnestly to discover some means of putting an end to the present difficulties that arise between Germany and England in Samoa. He insists that none of the proposals which have been made for conducting the government of that country on a tripartite foundation have any chance of success, and that the only result of renewing the experiment is that there will be a constant source of friction and difference between the two countries.

I was unable to contest his Excellency's view, because I was well aware that the Commission which has recently acted under international authority in the Samoan Islands had come to the conclusion that no institutions, however carefully modified, or however cunningly devised, had the slightest chance of success so long as they derived their authority from two or three Powers. It was clearly the opinion of the Commis-

sion, and is apparently that of all authorities who have spoken on the point, that the only hope of restoring good government to Samoa is to place either the whole group or the several islands under the control of a single Power. But, as his Excellency observed, though that general principle has been laid down, its application is fraught with difficulty. Popular opinion among the Australian Colonies solves the difficulty by suggesting that Great Britain should take the islands; popular opinion in Germany offers a corresponding solution by suggesting that Germany should take the islands; but as neither of these alternatives can be looked upon in their broad expression as diplomatically possible, he said it was necessary to find some mode by which they could be divided among the Powers. America was in any case already secure of her share by the Treaty which gave her rights over the Harbour of Pango Pango. The two islands that remain, the Island of Upolu and the Island of Savaii, are not capable of an equal division, because the possession of a harbour and a capital, and of considerable cultivable soil, places Upolu in a position of advantage which would prevent either Germany or Great Britain from accepting Savaii as its equivalent. The real question is how it is to be decided to what Power the Island of Upolu is to belong. When that decision has been made, of course the other Power would receive the sovereignty of Savaii, but would certainly not be contented with the equivalent. Plans of exchange by which Great Britain should take Upolu, and should compensate Germany by some additional cession elsewhere, or that a similar mode of satisfying the claims of Great Britain should accompany the cession of Upolu to Germany, have been recommended in several quarters, but they break down when they come to be examined in detail. It would be very difficult in any case to find any equivalent elsewhere which either Great Britain or Germany would look upon as a fair indemnification for the abandonment of Upolu; and in the present case there is another difficulty attached to the principle of the exchange, on account of the character of the British Empire. An equivalent might be found for Germany out of the possessions of England in some other part of the globe; but these possessions are mainly belonging to Colonies which would loudly protest if they were asked to sacrifice their own territory for the purpose of carrying through an Australian bargain.

Putting aside, therefore, the question of compensation by the allotment of territory, the question of determining to what Power Upolu is to go must be decided in other ways. I suggested that if the matter was so very hopeless, in consideration of the fact that agreement between Germany and England was of great importance, and that the value of the islands was not very great, that the ownership of Upolu might be decided by lot. To this, however, his Excellency entirely objected, as he said it would not satisfy the national feeling of the Germans. He, on his side, proposed that an Arbitrator should be selected, who should have the unrestricted right of determining to which of the two Powers on equitable principles Upolu ought to belong. I expressed myself unable to accept that alternative, because I did not see what the equitable principles were on which the Arbitrator would have to decide. What considerations were they which would give to Great Britain or Germany a preferable right to be adjudicated as the owner of Upolu? The question could not be evaded, for the Arbitrator must have a guide. He might be asked to adopt as his principle that the Power whose subjects had first settled in Samoa should be held to have the right; or the Power which possessed at the present moment the greatest trade with those islands; or the Power whose subjects are the most numerous among the present settlers in the island; or the Power who should be elevated to that position by the preponderant vote of the native inhabitants; or, lastly, the Power which possessed the smallest amount of territory in those seas, and to whom, therefore, the addition of Samoa could be fairly looked upon as a suitable compensation. I did not conceal from his Excellency that I suspected that in practice, if such an arbitration were set up, there would be a great temptation to decide it on the latter plan, unless special care to exclude it were taken in the order of reference. But I feared, in any case, that the difficulties of agreeing upon the principles on which the Arbitrator was bound to act, and of constructing the order of reference by which his steps were to be guided, would be so serious that there

would be no hope of our finding an issue by this plan. I suggested to his Excellency that, if it could be possible to come to any conclusion as to the relative values of the two islands, especially in regard to the superiority which Upolu can boast in the possession of a port, it might be possible to make the equivalent which is to efface the inequality between the two take the form of a money payment, to be decided by the Arbitrator, the money to be applied in so improving the small existing harbour of Savaii that it might not be wholly unequal to the more popular harbour of Upolu. I said that this was merely an idea that had crossed my mind, but I must not be held to be committed to it. It would be necessary to enquire from experts to see whether, in the actual condition of things, there was any foundation for it on which we could rely.

His Excellency did not negative this idea, and at the same time declined to acknowledge that his own original suggestion had been disposed of. We separated, therefore, without having come to any agreement. No doubt the discussion will be resumed on a future occasion. By several expression that he dropped, I gathered that his great earnestness upon this question arises, not from the intrinsic value of the islands, or even from the vehemence of German opinion on the subject, but that it is a question on which the Emperor himself has fixed his heart, and is pursuing his own solution with his well-known inflexible tenacity.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 147.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 332.

(No. 227.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. September 15, 1899.

My Lord,

R. September 18, 1899.

I called upon Baron von Richthofen on the 13th instant on my return to Berlin from Homburg, and in reply to my enquiries he told me that he had hopes that we were now not far from a settlement of the Samoan question. Count Hatzfeldt was to have an interview with your Lordship on the following day, and if I would call again, he hoped to be able to give me further information on the subject.

This afternoon, Baron von Richthofen told me that he greatly regretted that the solution did not seem so near as he had hoped, and that your Lordship had said that you wished to consult the Governors of the Australian Colonies, and to study the Report of the High Commission before giving a definite answer to Count Hatzfeldt.

Baron von Richthofen went on to say that the position was as follows :—

It had been practically agreed to leave the Island of Tutuila to the Americans. There remained therefore Upolu and Savaii, but as these were of unequal value, it had been proposed that Tonga and Savage Island should be added to the latter, and that an Arbitrator should decide to which Power the different lots should be assigned. He considered that Savaii with Tonga and Savage Island would form a fair equivalent for Upolu, and that at all events a solution might thus be arrived at, which would put an end to a question upon which public opinion in Germany had been greatly excited, and which was the only one which created a difference between our two countries.

I replied that I had understood that Upolu and Savaii were so closely connected that an attempt to divide them would only create further difficulties, and I reminded Baron von Richthofen that your Lordship had warned Count Hatzfeldt that you were opposed to any interference with Tonga. Baron von Richthofen said that this was so, and that probably the Power to whom Savaii was assigned would find it advantageous to exchange it for some other possession. It was, however, necessary to find some solution of the question, and to put an end as soon as possible to the tridominium which had led to such unsatisfactory results. It was scarcely doubtful that the Governors

of the Australian Colonies would object to any of the islands being given to Germany, and there were points in the Report of the High Commission, such as the renunciation of Consular jurisdiction, to which Germany could not agree. Then again there was Tonga itself, where it was possible that a similar question might arise, for a Treaty had been concluded between the Commander of a German warship and the King of Tonga, of which no mention has yet been made, as the German Government wished to maintain their agreement with Her Majesty's Government with regard to the independence of Tonga. It was to be feared that the continuance of the Government by the three Consuls in Samoa would lead to further disagreement between the Powers, and it was therefore in his opinion most desirable that a solution of some sort should be arrived at without delay. He earnestly hoped that this might be done before the visit of the Emperor to Windsor took place. It was not likely that His Majesty's actions would be openly criticised, but he could tell me, confidentially, that considerable surprise would be felt that His Majesty should visit England while the question of Samoa remained unsettled, whereas, if any sort of solution had been arrived at, his visit would be considered as perfectly natural, and would be hailed with general satisfaction.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 148.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Pacific Islands 333.

(No. 182.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, September 22, 1899.

The German Ambassador called at the Foreign Office to-day, and we resumed our discussion of the 15th instant respecting Samoa, which I recorded in my despatch to your Excellency No. 172 of that date.

I informed Count Hatzfeldt that Her Majesty's Government accept the proposal to determine by the arbitration of the King of Sweden and Norway the question between the two Powers as to the possession of the Islands of Upolu and Savaii. I requested that the German Government would draw up the Rules upon which the King's decision should be based, and that they would communicate the draft to enable Her Majesty's Government to suggest such modifications as they might consider necessary.

It was suggested that in reference to arbitration the Power to whom Savaii might be awarded should also be given the Tonga group; and further, that if Germany received Savaii she should also receive the Gilbert Islands, while in the event of Savaii falling to Great Britain the latter should receive from Germany the renunciation of German extraterritorial rights in the Sultanate of Zanzibar.

In the course of our interview I put before Count Hatzfeldt a suggestion which has been made to the effect that Germany should renounce all rights over the Samoan Islands, and also withdraw all claim to the territory on the West Coast of Africa reserved as a neutral zone by Agreement between Great Britain and Germany in 1888, receiving in compensation the delta of the Volta.

His Excellency stated that he did not think this proposal would be accepted: the delta of the Volta would not be considered by the German Government as an equivalent for the abandonment of the neutral zone and all rights over Samoa.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Pacific Islands 333.

(No. 192.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 6, 1899.

On Friday last, and again to-day, Count Hatzfeldt discussed at considerable length the question of the possible partition of Samoa. There are points of grave difficulty still to be surmounted before an agreement can be arrived at.

In the first place, the German Government appear to shrink from any definite and formal decision as to the mode in which the portions of territory on which we are operating are to be assigned to their respective owners. They do not wish to agree that Samoa, or any part of it, shall be German or shall be British; but they wish it to be decided by an arbitrator. On the other hand, they are indisposed to leave matters to the chances of arbitration, without exactly defining the method by which such an end is to be attained.

They contemplate taking measures which will ensure that the arbitrator shall conform his decision to arrangements made beforehand between the two Powers. I do not quite myself understand how this is to be done; but it does not seem to me to be a satisfactory mode of action, or one that would reflect credit upon either Power, if, as is almost certain, it should ultimately come to be known.

There is again a difficulty with respect to private rights. The German Government wish that Great Britain should purchase the commercial property of a great Company which has its seat at Hamburg, and which has practically represented the German interest in Samoa; and as your Excellency will see from the heads of agreement which Count Hatzfeldt submitted to me to-day, they propose that a payment shall be made on a liberal scale to the German Company by Her Majesty's Government, who will derive not the slightest pecuniary advantage from the transaction. I have expressed serious doubts whether such an arrangement could be submitted to the House of Commons with any chance of their approval, unless some corresponding pecuniary transaction favourable to the British Government should be agreed upon in respect to some other territory.

The most serious difficulty, however, in the arrangement, is the difficulty of agreeing as to the value, for the purposes of exchange, of the various portions of territory which are to be submitted to that operation. As the enclosure to which I have already referred will show, the German Government are at present in favour of a transaction by which the Island of Upolu, in which the capital, Apia, is situated, should be given to England, together with a certain square of territory in the hinterland of the African Gold Coast, which has been known for several years by the name of the neutral zone. In compensation for this, the German Government would receive British territory on the left bank of the Volta, being the territory which Great Britain purchased of the Danes in 1854, also the Island of Savaii, which is the other island of the Samoan group available for this purpose; also Savage Island and the Gilbert, Ellice, Phoenix, and Union groups; and also, that we should offer no objection to the occupation by Germany of the Island of Tonga, whose neutrality is now secured to us by special stipulations.

I have requested time to reflect upon the proposition contained in the enclosed paper,⁽¹⁾ as until my information is fuller than it is at present I am not able to express a confident opinion. But my provisional judgment upon the proposal is that it gives to Germany a great deal too much, and that the balance would only be approximately restored if the provisions with respect to Tonga were left out of the negotiation.

His Excellency has urged this transaction upon me with extraordinary vehemence, intimating in no obscure language that the future friendship of Germany could only

⁽¹⁾ Not reproduced.

be obtained at this price. What measures he meant to indicate as constituting an exhibition of the friendship of Germany, or what policy of an opposite kind he referred to as resulting from a failure to obtain this advantage, I am not myself able to judge. I have, however, not held out to him any hope that I can consider these proposals from such a point of view. I quite admit that it would be desirable both for the sake of the islands themselves and for the maintenance of harmony between England and Germany, that some arrangement should be come to which would prevent future friction; but I do not think that such an arrangement is at this moment pressing, or that the danger in Samoa of deferring it for a short time can be looked upon as serious. In any case, as I was not urging any change, I claimed the right to examine with care and deliberation the proposals which Germany had put forward for so marked an alteration of the *status quo*. As soon as I saw my way to a definitive opinion upon a question in which there were many elements of uncertainty, I promised that I would communicate with the German Ambassador.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 150.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 333.

(No. 242.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. October 10, 1899.

R. October 16, 1899.

By my telegram No. 17 of the 8th instant I attempted to report to your Lordship the substance of a long conversation which I had on the morning of this day with Count Bülow, who had returned to Berlin on the previous day, and had requested me to call upon him.

His Excellency dwelt at considerable length and with great earnestness on the necessity of a speedy arrangement being come to with regard to Samoa. It was his earnest desire to arrive at a thoroughly cordial understanding with England, which he was fully convinced was essential to the true interests of both countries.

Last year we had arrived at an understanding with regard to Africa, and the only question which now separated the two countries was Samoa, which only a short time ago seemed to approach a settlement.

It appeared, however, that your Lordship now required further time for reflection and the solution of the question had again been postponed. It was most unfortunate that this should be the case.

Public opinion in Germany, whether rightly or wrongly, was very sensitive with regard to Samoa, and he need scarcely tell me was hostile to England as regards the present situation in South Africa. His Excellency was sure that I would admit that the action of the German Government with regard to the Transvaal had been perfectly correct, and they would certainly maintain a strict neutrality in the event of war, but it could not be denied that at this moment England occupied the position, as regards European public opinion, which Prussia occupied at the beginning of the Danish war. Then Prussia fought in consequence of the maltreatment of her subjects in Schleswig-Holstein, and met with the general disapproval of European public opinion. She had been able to outlive this, and England would doubtless do the same in her quarrel with the Transvaal. He was also fully aware that the position of England as a European Power would in no way be affected by anything that occurred in South Africa. Even a reverse to her arms in the Transvaal would not diminish her naval power. His remarks, therefore, were not to be considered as a threat, but merely as a proof of the difficulty he experienced in carrying out the policy of a cordial understanding between our two countries.

Until, however, the Samoan question was settled, and settled in a manner which would satisfy public opinion in Germany, it would be hopeless to attempt to arrive at such a cordial understanding which it was his earnest desire to bring about, and he sincerely hoped that a satisfactory solution of the question might be arrived at before the Emperor's visit to England next month. . . .

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 151.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Pacific Islands 333.

(No. 202A.) Secret.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 27, 1899.

I informed Sir Frank Lascelles in my despatch No. 192 of the 6th instant of my conversations with the German Ambassador relative to the question of the possible partition of Samoa, and I forwarded to him the heads of Agreement submitted to me by his Excellency.

Count Hatzfeldt to-day communicated to me fresh heads of Agreement, copy of which I enclose, in place of those described in that despatch.

In submitting these proposals, his Excellency informed me, confidentially, that the terms of Article I were to be understood as giving to Great Britain, in addition to the Tonga Islands with the Vavan group, and the western part of the neutral zone in the hinterland of the African Gold Coast, with the exception of Yendi, all the Solomon Islands now belonging to Germany which lie to the east and south-east of the Island of Bougainville. It was not intended to except any one of these islands, but for reasons of internal policy, and in view of the eventual publication of the Treaty in Germany, the German Government attached importance to the Article being drafted in its present shape.

Count Hatzfeldt requested that this explanation might be considered as absolutely confidential.

The Island of Buka would, of course, he stated, like Bougainville, to the north of which it lies and of which it forms a part, continue to belong to Germany.

His Excellency further explained that by Article III Germany would renounce her extra-territorial rights in Zanzibar, but the German Government earnestly wished, out of consideration for public opinion in Germany that this stipulation should be so drafted that the renunciation would only come into force at the time of the abolition of analogous rights of extra-territoriality belonging to other nations.

They would be extremely obliged if Her Majesty's Government would consent to this.

They would prefer that the provision relative to the renunciation of the right of extra-territoriality should be embodied in a special Additional Article to the Treaty, which should by agreement be kept secret provisionally, Her Majesty's Government being left free, in the event of secret negotiations being entered into with other Governments on the question of extra-territoriality at Zanzibar, to inform those Governments, confidentially, of the contents of the Article.

Count Hatzfeldt stated that the German Government were very anxious, if an understanding were arrived at, that it should be kept absolutely secret until the signature of the Treaty which would embody it.

He requested that, when the proposals had been considered in the light of the explanations he had given, he might be informed as soon as possible whether they

were accepted, and he laid stress, in case of their acceptance, on the importance of the form and final drafting of the Treaty being discussed without delay.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

Enclosure in No. 151.

Proposed Heads of Agreement

(Received from German Ambassador, October 27, 1899.)

Germany receives Upolu and Savaii and the eastern part of the neutral zone, including the territory of Yendi. Germany surrenders her rights on Gambaga.

2. England receives the Tonga Islands, including Vavau, the western part of the neutral zone in West Africa, with the exception of Yendi, and of the German Solomons Islands those situated east of and south-east of Bougainville.

3. Germany gives up her extra-territorial rights in Zanzibar.

4. The Agreement existing at present between Germany and England as to the right of engaging labourers from the English Solomons Islands will be likewise extended to the German Solomons Islands above mentioned.

5. The boundary in the neutral zone shall be the Daka River to the point of its intersection by the 9th degree, from this point a straight line to the north, so that the territory of Yendi remains German, Gambaga, English.

6. The Consuls of both parties at Apia and in the Tonga Islands shall be recalled.

7. The German Government are prepared to meet as far as possible, and in the most liberal way, any wishes of the English Government with regard to the future form of the reciprocal Customs Tariffs between Togoland and the Gold Coast Colony.

No. 152.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Pacific Islands 333.

(No. 202B.) Secret.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, October 27, 1899.

In my despatch No. 202A of this day's date I forwarded the heads of Agreement submitted to me by the German Ambassador for the settlement of the Samoan and other pending questions.

His Excellency subsequently informed me that, should Her Majesty's Government wish Savage Island to be included among the possessions which Great Britain is to receive under Article II of the Arrangement, the German Government would raise no objection.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 153.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Count Hatzfeldt.

F.O. Pacific Islands 334.

Hatfield House,

My dear Count Hatzfeldt,

Hatfield, November 4, 1899.

I beg to acknowledge your letter which I received last night enclosing the draft of your suggestions for a Convention between England and Germany on the subject of Samoa and other territories. I think there are some omissions which it would be desirable to supply, even in a preliminary project such as that which you have

forwarded to me. I do not think it will be satisfactory to use the phrase "Germany receives" and "Great Britain receives" the various territories allotted to them by the Convention because the word does not clearly indicate the nature of the interest which is created for Germany and England respectively by the terms of the Convention. The word "receives" simply would mean that the territories are to be annexed and will become part of the British Empire and the German Empire, and so forth. If this is meant, it should be said, but I have considerable doubt whether it would be expedient. I think we should prefer to take the protectorate at least of Tonga. It would perhaps therefore be wiser to add the words familiar in these cases: imposing upon Germany the obligation not to extend any protectorate, or receive any cession of any kind, in the territories assigned to England. The same phrase would be used with respect to Samoa, namely that England should not establish any protectorate, or accept any cession on the islands of Samoa. As it would be desirable that a uniform phrase should be employed for expressing the future rights of America in Tutuila, and of Great Britain in Tonga, and of Germany over Samoa, it may be necessary before this redaction is finally agreed upon, that we should consult the United States upon the point. It will also be necessary that Germany should surrender the treaty right she now possesses to have extraterritorial jurisdiction in Tonga and the power of establishing a coal station. Great Britain should surrender the same rights she now possesses in respect of Samoa.

I do not quite understand the object of proposing that Great Britain and Germany should withdraw their consuls respectively from Samoa and Tonga. It would be of course necessary that each Power should engage that its Consular representative should not interfere in any matters except those which are ordinarily the subject of Consular action, and some words specially guarding against any political activity on their part might be desirable. But I do not think it would be possible to abolish consuls altogether, because there is a considerable trade going on in both islands, which in the case of Samoa, when peace is restored, is likely notably to increase. It would, therefore, be most inconvenient to deprive the merchants who conduct that trade of the ordinary assistance and supervision which the institution of Consular agents by their own Government in all other countries offers to them.

With respect to the neutral zone, Mr. Chamberlain desires a slight modification in the western boundary of the German sphere. . . . [Details follow.]

Believe me, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 154.

Lieutenant-Colonel J. M. Grierson to Viscount Gough.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1471.

(No. 63/99.) Secret.

Sir,

Berlin, November 6, 1899.

I have the honour to report that I was this day received in audience by His Majesty the Emperor, with a view to my reporting myself as ordered to be in attendance on him during his visit to Windsor. . . .

. . . . His Majesty then began to talk about Samoa, and expressed great dissatisfaction at the prolongation of the negotiations. He said, as near as I can recollect :—

"Your Government in England appears to have two heads, Lord Salisbury and Mr. Chamberlain, and the one will not do what the other wants. With Mr. Chamberlain the negotiations proceed smoothly and quickly and an agreement could be come to with him very rapidly, but what he agrees to Lord Salisbury refuses to sanction, and so the affair is dragged out for months and months. You

make any concessions asked for by France or Russia, you cede half continents to them, but when Germany asks for an island, two-thirds of which has been planted over by her subjects, she is met by a refusal. With America we could have settled long ago; it is England alone which causes delay. I am not the King of Portugal and this treatment of the subject is evidence of very bad diplomatic manners, to say the least. I tell you plainly that the impression produced in Germany by this delay is a very strong one. You know yourself how opposed the people and the press here are to my journey to England. I and Count Bülow are doing all we can to keep both in order, but I know that, if this Samoan matter is not settled before it is time for me to leave for England, my Ministers will recommend me not to leave the country. I have a very difficult part to play. I desire to remain friendly to England, but I have my duties as German Emperor to think of, and I cannot go on sitting on the safety-valve for ever. Does England not want my friendship, about the only one left her on the Continent? Some day when she is in trouble she will find that German patience has been tried too long."

It is not the first time I have had the above statements from His Majesty's mouth, and I do not attach very much importance to them, except to that of his visit to England being put off. He seemed to be in earnest when he said this, and I expect that this threat is a clever attempt to force the Samoa negotiations to a conclusion. Being quite unaware of the course of the negotiations, I of course made no replies. . . .

I have, &c.

J. M. GRIERSON.

No. 155.

Viscount Gough to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Pacific Islands 334.

(No. 280.)

My Lord,

Berlin, D. November 11, 1899.

R. November 13, 1899.

With reference to your Lordship's despatch, No. 212 of the 8th instant, I have the honour to state that the entire press of this country, without any distinction as to the various political tendencies of the different organs, has hailed the settlement of the Samoan question by a Convention leaving Upolu and Savaii to Germany with unbounded satisfaction, and all the newspapers are loud in their praise of the diplomatic skill with which M. de Bülow has stuck to his point, in the face of all obstacles, and carried the day by securing to Germany the two islands in question. The universal expression of satisfaction called forth by the fact that the German flag will in future wave over islands which are dear to the German people, both as the cradle of their colonial enterprises and as the death-bed of so many of their fellow-countrymen by land and sea, proves how deep is the sentimental feeling that the German public has for the Samoan Islands, and explains the intensely hostile attitude adopted towards Great Britain on this question [details follow]. .

I have, &c.

GOUGH.

No. 156.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1492.

(No. 48.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. February 16, 1900.

R. February 19, 1900.

With reference to my immediately preceding despatch of this day's date, I have the honour to report that Baron von Richthofen expressed his great satisfaction at the

conclusion of the Samoan question. He could have hoped that this solution might have been arrived at sooner, as much of the irritation of German public opinion against England would thereby have been avoided, but it was a matter of gratification that the only subject likely to create differences of opinion between the two Governments had now been settled. He was not aware of any other important question at issue between us, and he could assure me that I need not be uneasy about the action of the German Government with regard to the war in South Africa, as they would in no way mix themselves up with that question, and if any Power should propose that they should join in any intervention, the reply would be an unmistakable negative.
[Details follow.]

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The following papers deal with the settlement of Samoa: The Convention and Declaration between Great Britain and Germany, signed at London, November 14, 1899 (ratifications exchanged February 16, 1900), were presented to Parliament in November 1899. Texts are in *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. XCI, pp. 70–5. This was followed by a Convention between Great Britain, Germany and the United States, signed at Washington, December 2, 1899 (ratifications exchanged February 16, 1900), presented to Parliament in March 1900. This was accompanied by a convention between the same three Powers, and signed at Washington, November 7, 1899 (ratifications exchanged March 7, 1900), relating to the settlement of certain claims in Samoa by arbitration. The texts are in *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. XCI, pp. 75–81. The decision of the King of Sweden and Norway was given on October 14, 1902, in connection with this arbitration. *v. B.F.S.P.*, Vol. XCV, pp. 164–170. Germany's Declaration of Protectorate over the Samoa Islands west of 171° W. followed on February 17, 1900. (Text with certain other details in *B.F.S.P.*, Vol. XCII, pp. 794–6, 1063–4.)]

CHAPTER IV.

ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS, 1898.

PART I.—WEST AFRICA.

[*ED. NOTE.*—In 1897 France renewed the attempt, which had been frustrated in 1894–95 by the Royal Niger Company, to establish herself on the Niger below the Busa rapids. French troops occupied Busa in February, proceeded to take Goumba and Illo, higher up the river, and entered Nikki in November. The French activity decided the British Government to assume direct responsibility for the whole Niger region, and early in 1898 Colonel Lugard was sent out to raise a local force in preparation for the change. A French advance from the South and West was followed by the despatch of British forces from the Niger, Lagos and the Gold Coast Protectorate. A collision seemed only too probable, for in some cases the British and French flags were hoisted in the same village, and both sides complained angrily of the infringement of treaties with native chiefs. Meanwhile, a Niger Commission, consisting of two British and two French experts, had held numerous sessions at Paris; but no real progress towards agreement had been reached by the close of 1897. There is a good map of the disputed territory at p. 192 of H. R. Whates, *The Third Salisbury Administration*, (1900).]

No. 157.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Gosselin.

F.O. France (Africa) 3336.

(No. 438.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 30, 1897.

The time appears to have come when I may usefully place you in possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government as to the lines on which a compromise might possibly be arrived at between the respective claims of Great Britain and France in West Africa.

The difficulty in the way is that the French Government appear to contemplate as a compromise the exchange of incommensurate claims. In any arrangement the sacrifices made by both sides should be similar in character. Doubtful claims should be exchanged for doubtful claims, and rights for rights. But the French Commissioners only propose to abandon doubtful claims in exchange for the surrender by Great Britain of unquestionable rights. . . . [arbitration as to treaty rights].

There are two points to which the French appear to attach the greatest importance, and in respect of which it would seem possible for Her Majesty's Government to meet their wishes, namely :—

1. A connection between Dahomey and the other French possessions.
2. Access in some form or other to the Niger below the Rapids.

There would be no objection to Great Britain renouncing, as part of a general settlement, her claims to Borgu, west of the Phipps-Hanotiaux line of the 18th November, 1894, to Gurma, and Libtako, Yargha, Torodé, and Say. The French would then get the connection which they want with Dahomey through Yatenga, Gurma, and the portion of Borgu conceded to them.

With regard to the second point, it is not clear what is meant by "access." At the meeting of the 20th December, the French Commissioners expressed their great desire for "access to the Niger between Liaba and Bajibo from the neighbourhood of Nikki, the line of communication passing between Kiama and Busa," and they said that "they asked for this rather from a humanitarian than from a commercial point of view: they required access to the navigable river in order to be able to send their wounded soldiers down stream to the mouth of the Niger." If this is all that they want,

it should be possible to meet their wishes. There might be some difficulty as to the passage of armed parties with the invalids through British territory, and, before coming to any decision, it would seem desirable to ascertain through the British Commissioners more precisely what is wanted, what is to be the direction of the line of posts which the French talk of wishing to establish through Gurma, and why it is proposed that the access should be from the neighbourhood of Nikki.

The British Commissioners should inform Her Majesty's Government what difficulties there would, in their opinion, be in the way of conceding what is desired, and how these difficulties might be overcome.

If the French recur to the complaint that their rights under the Berlin Act to free navigation are interfered with by the Regulations of the Niger Company, it might also be possible, although the Law Officers have given an opinion that the existing Regulations are legal under the Act, to concert with the French such Regulations as would give them no legitimate cause for complaint, provided, of course, that they give to Great Britain the same rights on the French portion of the river as are given to the French on the British portion.

These concessions on points to which the French attach so much importance should go far towards making an arrangement possible. If further concessions have to be made, the British Commissioners have authority to offer Sinitia, in the Sierra Leone Protectorate, in exchange for something of real value elsewhere. They might also suggest the concession of the town of Nikki, the boundary being deflected so as to include Nikki [in] the French sphere.

If the French press for Mossi, Her Majesty's Government might in the last resort offer to concede that country, or a portion of it, in exchange for a new boundary (*e.g.*, the Komoe River) between the Colonies of the Gold and Ivory Coasts from the coast to the 9th parallel, which would give to Great Britain the whole of Gaman; but, owing to the engagements into which Her Majesty's Government have entered with the King of Mossi, they do not desire this exchange, and it would be preferable to get the British claim to Mossi recognised.

Any proposals for a compromise should, of course, be preceded by a full and emphatic statement of the British rights; and any concessions, or offer of concession, in regard to the Niger or territories on the right bank, must be conditional on a general settlement, including the recognition of British rights both to the territories secured to Her Majesty's Government by the Say-Barruwa line on the east of the river and to those behind the Gold Coast, which are claimed by them under Treaties, and are in the Hinterland of their possessions on the coast.

It is important to notice that on the 20th December the French Commissioners, when discussing the position of Bona, accepted Newtown, *i.e.*, the point of demarcation on the coast line, as the place from which the meridian dividing the Hinterlands of the respective Colonies was to be drawn.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 158.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3410.

(No. 11.) Africa.

My Lord,

Paris, D. January 10, 1898.

R. January 11, 1898.

I received yesterday your Lordship's despatch No. 7, Africa, of the 8th instant, containing instructions as to the language which should be held by the British Commissioners to their French colleagues on the Niger Conference in regard to the proceedings of the French in Nikki in pursuing and capturing the King of that country and keeping him in close confinement.

In transmitting to your Lordship yesterday the latest report of the British Commissioners. I drew your attention to what had passed between them and their French colleagues in regard to their original observations on French action in Mossi, and I stated that, in my opinion, those observations had been legitimate and justifiable.

As, however, I am desirous of avoiding anything which may render the task of the Commissioners more difficult by introducing elements which may embitter discussions already sufficiently delicate, I have come to the conclusion that as regards Nikki, which is evidently a point upon which the French will be even more susceptible than upon Mossi, it would be better for me to communicate the views of Her Majesty's Government direct to M. Hanotaux than to make use of the intermediary of the Commissioners.

It has at the same time appeared to me that in view of the absolute disregard of my previous written representations on this subject shown by the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, and of the solemn warning given to M. Hanotaux in my note of the 15th October last, I am amply justified in calling his Excellency's serious attention to the danger of the position thus created.

I have therefore addressed to him this day a note in which I have recapitulated all that I stated on the 15th October, reminding him that I have had no reply except a bare acknowledgment of the receipt of my note of that date, and pointing out to him, in the language which your Lordship had instructed the Commissioners to employ, that the French authorities at Nikki are endeavouring, in utter defiance of what is due on their part in connection with a matter under diplomatic discussion, to decide that matter by force in their own favour.

I have terminated my note by stating that such proceedings cannot but tend to render more difficult the progress of pending negotiations.

I may add that I have instructed the British Commissioners that, should suitable occasion arise, they may allude in conversation with their French colleagues to the step which I have been compelled to take.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Enclosure in No. 158.

Sir E. Monson to M. Hanotaux.

M. le Ministre,

Paris, January 10, 1898.

On the 15th October last, I had the honour to address to your Excellency a note calling your attention to the reports which had reached Her Majesty's Government from the west coast of Africa as to the movement of a French expedition against Nikki.

In this note I enquired, by order of my Government, what truth there was in these reports, adding that I was desired to express the hope that they were unfounded, as if they should be true it would be my duty to protest on behalf of Her Majesty's Government against the despatch of French troops into territory over which the British Protectorate has been established, and duly notified to the Government of the Republic some years ago, and especially against the occupation of a town within that Protectorate, the Ruler of which is bound to Her Majesty's Government by a Treaty of prior date to any which is claimed by the French Government.

To this note your Excellency replied on the 21st October that you had communicated its contents to the Minister of the Colonies, and that you would not fail to inform me of his reply as soon as it should reach you; but since that date I have received no further communication on this subject from your Excellency.

Very serious information has now, however, reached Her Majesty's Government as to the recent proceedings of the French forces in Nikki. It appears that the King of that country has been pursued and captured by the French troops, and is being kept by them in close confinement.

Now, although the French Government may not acknowledge the validity of the British Treaty with Nikki, it is held to be valid by Her Majesty's Government, to whom it appears that the conduct of the French authorities on the spot indicates not only an endeavour to settle by forcible means in their own favour a matter which is actually one of the subjects of the negotiations now being held in Paris on West African questions, but a determination to proceed as if they had had no notice whatever of the claim of Great Britain to the territory of which they have taken possession.

Under these circumstances your Excellency will hardly be surprised at my directing your attention to proceedings which cannot but tend to render the progress of the negotiations above referred to still more difficult.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 159.

Minute by the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3408.

Mr. Bertie,

January 11, 1898.

I do not think the Cabinet, as at present disposed will give any territorial possession to France on the banks of the navigable Niger. But I think a general negative statement to that effect is going further than is necessary to carry out the view of the Cabinet.

Our line should be to offer access to the Niger in the former and under the conditions mentioned in Colonial Office letter to us. But we ought not to recognise the possibility of the territorial solution until it is proposed by France. If so proposed, it would according to the present view of the Cabinet be rejected. But that concrete rejection would not preclude us from accepting later if we saw cause for doing so a proposal practically of the same kind. But if we lay down an abstract negative now it would interpose an almost insuperable obstacle, if the course of events should make us wish to revert to this solution.

I think this might be explained to Mr. Gosselin in a private letter.

S.

No. 160.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3410.

(No. 15.) Africa.

Paris, D. January 12, 1898.

My Lord,

R. January 13, 1898.

M. Hanotaux complained to me this afternoon that the French post which had been advanced towards Bona had been compelled by force on the part of the British to fall back. This information had been received yesterday by the Minister of the Colonies, and was of a serious character, as it implied the violation of the compact between the two Governments that no force was to be used on such emergencies. A hot-headed officer might, in such an eventuality as that which had occurred, bring about actual hostilities.

I said that I did not believe that any force had been used, or even threatened. That the report received in London stated that representations had been made to the French officer, who had reluctantly retired.

M. Hanotaux replied that the word "reluctantly" implied that pressure of some kind had been used, and that at any rate the incident was in strong contrast to what had happened at Wa, where the utmost courtesy, not to say cordiality, had been shown on both sides.

Your Lordship will probably receive a formal complaint on the subject from the French Embassy.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 161.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3410.

(No. 16.) Africa.

Paris, D. January 12, 1898.

My Lord,

R. January 13, 1898.

As soon as I saw M. Hanotaux to-day, he asked me if I had anything to tell him from your Lordship upon "la grosse question," meaning, of course, West Africa.

I said that there had been no change in the views of Her Majesty's Government, and, consequently, no necessity for your Lordship to give me any fresh instructions; that you were quite satisfied with the manner in which the negotiations are being conducted by Mr. Gosselin and Colonel Everett; and that, whenever necessary, instructions upon details would be given to them. That, in the meantime, I believe that it was your Lordship's opinion, as it is certainly mine, that those negotiations should be left entirely to the Commissioners, and not be hampered by my own interference, which, as matters stand, would not expedite their progress.

I said, further, that, if we are to expect a satisfactory result, it could only be by the exercise of patience and good temper all round; and to this expression of my opinion M. Hanotaux gave a not very cheerful assent.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 162.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3410.

(No. 31.) Africa.

Paris, D. January 20, 1898.

My Lord,

R. January 21, 1898.

I have the honour to enclose a Memorandum on the present situation of the negotiations between the British and French Governments on West African questions, which has been drawn up by the British Commissioners in consultation with myself, in conformity with the views which, after mature discussion and reflection, we find ourselves brought to adopt.

I fear that the conclusions to which we have come will not be palatable to Her Majesty's Government: but we have thought it much better, and indeed our duty, to submit those conclusions to your Lordship's consideration with absolute frankness.

It is not an agreeable task to make such a statement as that which your Lordship will find contained in this Memorandum; but I can honestly declare that we have had no other consideration before us than the desire to place before Her Majesty's Government the best material at our disposal for deciding upon a question of great gravity;

and while we feel that we need not fear being suspected of any desire to truckle to unfounded French pretensions, we are at the same time convinced that we should badly serve the interests of Her Majesty's Government and of the country at large if we did not pointedly draw attention to the advantages of the French position, and the indubitable strength of the case against us.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Enclosure in No. 162.

Memorandum.

The negotiations which are being held in Paris in connection with the respective rights of Great Britain and France in the Hinterlands of the Gold Coast Colony, the Colony of Lagos and the Niger Company's Territories having reached a distinctly critical stage, we think it might be desirable, before carrying out our present instructions and thereby risking the possibility of a rupture, to lay before Her Majesty's Government the views which we have formed during the course of the negotiations respecting those rights, and to suggest for their consideration the outline of an arrangement which, so far as we are able to judge, would be acceptable to France, and which would, nevertheless, assure to the Colonies under consideration such territory as is necessary for their future development.

In sketching this outline, we wish it to be clearly understood that it represents exclusively the arrangement which we consider most in accord with the really material interests of the Colonies, and consequently with those of the mother country; and that we do not take into account such other considerations as must be left to the exclusive judgment of Her Majesty's Government, concerning as they do the extent to which British policy must be determined by popular sentiment and susceptibility.

Some remarks will be added on the future position of Great Britain and France in these countries, supposing that the present negotiations were to break down, and that Her Majesty's Government were not prepared to go to war.

Before entering on an examination of the claims of the two countries, we should be glad to be allowed to clear the ground by stating our views as to the possibility of applying the Hinterland doctrine in support of them.

It should, we think, be clearly understood that any Power is free to acquire new possessions, either by occupation or by Treaty, with the native Rulers in any country in the interior of Africa lying outside or beyond territory which has been secured by international Agreement to the various Colonies or Protectorates established on the coasts, and that the "Hinterland doctrine" is only applied, and even then can only be applied in its entirety in effecting arrangements respecting countries in which none of the Contracting Parties has acquired rights. A glance at the map of Africa will show the truth of this latter statement.

That any Power is at liberty to acquire new rights in any part of the interior of Africa not covered by Treaty is a self-evident fact. If it were not so, there would be no *raison d'être* for the present negotiations, which consist mainly of an enquiry into the rights which have been acquired by each Power beyond the Treaty Hinterlands, and of an endeavour to arrange a boundary between their possessions in accordance with these rights. Such being the case, it does not seem possible for any one Power to address to any other a complaint to the effect that a trespass on its territory has been committed, should the other have crossed somewhere in the interior the prolongation of a line drawn by mutual agreement, only to a point at a certain distance from the coast, in accordance with the Hinterland doctrine—a line, in fact, bounding a Treaty Hinterland. The reply to such a complaint is obvious. Similarly, it is not possible for a Power to take credit to itself, or to expect to obtain credit from another Power, for having abstained from occupying, or acquiring rights in, the territory lying at the back of the Treaty Hinterland of another Power.

For instance, it was quite within the right of Great Britain, working in rear of the Treaty Hinterlands, to have connected Sierra Leone with the Gold Coast, or the Gold Coast Colony with Lagos, and, indeed, it was with this latter intention that the Ferguson Missions of 1892 and 1894 were organised. Mr. Ferguson's instructions on those occasions were to make a ring of Treaties in the countries at the back of the neutral zone. As is well known, he proceeded, carrying out these instructions, as far eastward as Sansanne Mango, at the back of the Hinterland of Togoland, and only stopped there because he believed, as was generally believed at that time, that the country lying further to the eastward was fully secured to us by the Niger Company's Treaties with Borgu. If then we have failed to shut out Togoland and the French Colony of Dahomey from access to the interior of the continent, it is certainly not because we were hindered by scruples as to the morality of such a proceeding.

It is trusted that the foregoing observations are sufficient to show the futility of attempting, in the present discussion with the French, to fall back on the Hinterland doctrine as an argument against the French on the ground of trespass, or in favour of our own case on the ground of self-denial.

That the whole of the discussion should refer to territory which lies, for the most part, within the prolongation of the lines bounding our Treaty Hinterlands is, undoubtedly, a most unfortunate circumstance; but considering that it has always been open to Great Britain to secure for herself, not only the whole of this territory, but also as much as she might desire of the country lying at the back of the Treaty Hinterlands of her neighbours, it can only be argued—if she has not secured it either by occupation or by indisputably valid Treaty rights—that either she did not consider such acquisition to be consistent with her interests, or that the Local Governments failed to take such steps as were necessary to ensure that acquisition.

In our opinion, our present difficulties with France have mainly arisen from a combination of these two circumstances, coupled with the failure, both at home and abroad, to realise and appreciate the activity of the French in West Africa until too late.

The instructions which we have received for the conduct of the present negotiations are briefly as follows:—

On the Gold Coast an unbroken Hinterland is to be maintained from the 9th parallel of latitude as far as and including Mossi. This latter country, or a portion of it, may, however, be conceded in the last resort in exchange for a new boundary (the Komoe River) between the Colonies of the Gold and Ivory Coasts, from the coast to the 9th parallel.

On the eastern side, in rear of the Hinterlands of Lagos and the Niger Territories, the whole of the country falling to the eastward of a line drawn due north from the intersection of the 9th parallel of latitude with the eastern frontier of Dahomey, commonly called "the Phipps-Hanotaux line of 1894," is to be maintained in the British sphere, except that this boundary line may be deflected so as to include the town of Nikki within the French sphere.

It appears to us that these instructions are of too stringent a nature to admit of any hope that the whole of the demands which are contained in them will be acceded to by France; and, indeed, if all the circumstances of the case are taken into consideration, it may be said with reason that they are hardly such as any nation having regard for its dignity could accede to, except after war followed by defeat, for they involve the retirement of French troops on the east from territory which they have occupied for nearly a year, and on the west from territory which they have occupied for close upon a year and a half.

It may also be observed that the instructions, as they stand, are so rigid in character as to leave but little room for negotiation. Apart from the examination of Treaty rights, there seems little to be done beyond stating clearly our demands and adding a few remarks on the gravity of the situation which would be created in the event of these demands not being complied with.

It is because the examination of the Treaty rights is rapidly approaching conclusion that we think it right to place on record our views respecting the different points at issue between the two Governments before making a statement which might commit Her Majesty's Government to the adoption of a policy involving, in our opinion, the possibility of war with France, or, at all events, the certainty of a further loss of territory on the east of the Niger, the value of which to Great Britain is far greater than that of any of the territory which she has hitherto lost in these regions; or, finally, the grave danger, which the examination of the Treaties causes us to apprehend as probable, of an arbitral decision adverse to a very large portion of our claims.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [NOTE.—The rest of this lengthy memorandum deals with details.]

No. 163.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France (Africa) 3416.

Tel. (No. 4.) Africa.

Foreign Office, January 28. 1898.

Point out to Minister of Foreign Affairs that the course which we should take in present negotiations would be very largely influenced by the fiscal policy which the French Government intended to adopt. Our object is, as we have more than once declared, not territory, but facility for trade.

The settlement of territorial controversies would be enormously promoted by a knowledge that our trade would not be injured by any concessions we might make.

Propose to Minister of Foreign Affairs that we should agree that if a settlement on the territorial question is arrived at, both nations should have an identic tariff on all the frontiers (see frontiers, of course, included) of their West African possessions. The tariff would have to be settled between them. It might be settled every year, or every five years, and, in case of difference of opinion on any point, might be summarily decided by the Head of the Customs in Belgium or Denmark.

No. 164.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3410.

(No. 39.) Africa.

Paris, D. January 31. 1898.

My Lord,

R. February 2, 1898.

On the receipt of your Lordship's telegram No. 4, Africa, of the 28th instant, I waited without delay upon M. Hanotaux, whom, however, I was unable to see in time to report the nature of my interview by the messenger of that evening.

I explained to his Excellency at once the purport of your Lordship's proposal, and gave him a French paraphrase of your telegram. I offered at the same time to address to him a formal note in the same sense, but, as I had anticipated, he said that he preferred the method of communication of which I had already made use.

After carefully reading the paraphrase twice over, M. Hanotaux begged me to inform your Lordship that he had already been giving his attention to this subject, on which, as far as he is himself personally concerned, he entirely shares your views. There would be a Cabinet Council next day, and M. Hanotaux said that he would take advantage of that opportunity to speak of your Lordship's proposal to M. Méline and M. Lebon, and that he would use all his influence with these Ministers to induce them to enter upon the course proposed.

His Excellency observed that, as I must be well aware of the strong protectionist views held by both the Premier and the Colonial Minister, it was hardly necessary for him to warn me that there might well be considerable difficulty in bringing them round to this opinion, and that, at any rate, account would have to be taken of the needs of what might be called an "infant Colony."

M. Hanotaux went on to say that the Niger Conference negotiations had now gone on for a considerable length of time, and that on every account it is necessary to terminate them. Consequently, this proposal of your Lordship should be considered as soon as possible. He must tell me that latterly M. Lebon had become very impatient, and had pointed out that, in spite of the negotiations, Her Majesty's Government continue to send out to the West Coast of Africa officers, men and munitions of war. The French Colonial Ministry cannot much longer delay following this example. But the most serious aspect of the question is that presented by the fact that the maintenance of peace locally depends upon the calmness and discretion of subordinate officers, and even non-commissioned officers, and that it is highly improbable that this situation can endure much longer without a collision, which would almost inevitably precipitate a war, for objects which in themselves cannot be worth so grave a calamity.

M. Hanotaux's manner was very grave, and he begged me most earnestly to draw your Lordship's attention to this danger, which, he said, he thought it impossible to exaggerate, adding that, while very desirous of seeing some general scheme of arrangement definitely proposed for adoption, he must express the hope that Her Majesty's Government would ask nothing of the French Government to which it would be impossible for the latter to agree. His Excellency did not enter into an explanation of his meaning beyond the statement that to ask for a general retreat would, of course, be asking an impossibility.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 165.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France (Africa) 3408.

(No. 87.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 15, 1898.

Her Majesty's Government have given their most careful attention to the critical position of the negotiations between the Niger Commissioners, as shown in your Excellency's recent despatches.

It is still their earnest desire to arrive at a solution compatible with the interest and dignity of both countries, and they are, therefore, ready to consider the statement made by the French Commissioners, at the eighteenth meeting, to the effect that the project already put forward has broken down, as affording an opportunity for laying before the French Government a scheme of a comprehensive and definite character for the settlement of all the questions coming within the scope of the Commission.

In so doing, they put aside the questions of international comity arising out of those movements of French troops, of which it has been your Excellency's duty so frequently to complain. They make large territorial concessions in regions where they have Treaty rights which, in their opinion, have stood the test of the minute enquiry to which they have been subjected by the Commissioners, and which were obtained before France attempted to extend her influence over the Chiefs with whom the British Treaties were concluded. The value of the territories in question is incontestable, and the measure of the sacrifice which their renunciation entails upon Great

Britain may be gauged by the keenness of the rivalry which their possession has excited.

In addition to these territorial concessions, the proposals of Her Majesty's Government embrace the remodelling of any provisions of the Regulations for the navigation of the Niger which may be proved to tell disadvantageously on French commerce, although the highest legal authorities of the Crown have advised that there is nothing in the present rules which is inconsistent with the letter or spirit of the General Act of Berlin, by which the navigation is regulated.

If Her Majesty's Government are unable to grant territorial access to the Niger, it is from no feeling of unfriendliness to the Government of the Republic, and from no desire to hamper the great work which France is accomplishing in West Africa. It is their sincere conviction that such a concession, besides being incompatible with the position secured to Great Britain at the Berlin Conference, would defeat the objects which the two Governments have at heart of securing an arrangement in West Africa which will admit of their working side by side in their own spheres of action without friction and to their mutual advantage.

Whilst dealing in this spirit with the concessions which they themselves are willing to make, Her Majesty's Government ask nothing from that of the Republic but (1) the recognition of the rights of Great Britain over territories which were placed under British protection years ago with the full official knowledge of the French Government, and which, in spite of that knowledge, and in face of repeated protests from Her Majesty's Embassy, have since been occupied by French forces; (2) an adjustment of territory in rear of the Gold Coast Colony, under which the larger share goes to France; and (3) an extension of that identity of fiscal policy which has already been applied in parts of West Africa. Any territorial arrangement which gave to France the whole of the territories under discussion to the west of the Niger would clearly defeat the purpose of the Commission, which was to divide them between the two countries.

The following is the scheme which the British Commissioners are authorised to lay before their French colleagues.

Behind the Gold Coast Her Majesty's Government would recognise Mossi and the northern part of Gurunsi as falling within the French sphere, whilst Bona, Lobi, Southern Gurunsi, Mamprusi, and all territory lying between any of these districts and the 9th parallel of latitude would be recognised as falling within the British sphere.

No alteration would take place in the frontier as already settled north of the 9th parallel. North of that parallel they would be delimited on the spot by a Joint Commission.

Her Majesty's Government hope, however, that, if this arrangement is come to, the King of Mossi, with whom Great Britain has a Treaty, and who has appealed to Her Majesty's Government for protection, will be allowed to resume his former position, or, if this is impossible, that adequate compensation will be given him.

Behind Lagos the line proposed by the British Commissioners on the 28th April, 1896, from the 9th parallel of latitude as far as its intersection with the Niger, would be recognised as the frontier. In order, however, to avoid the objections inseparable from a frontier defined solely by a meridian, and in order to assure to the populations of Bere, Okuta, and adjacent places now occupied by the British the protection so recently confirmed to them, the line of 1896 would be deflected in the southern portion, so as to include within the British sphere these districts, together with the towns of Ashigéré and Bétê. In the northern portion the line would be deflected from a point north of Ilo, so as to leave within the British sphere all territory belonging to the Province of Boussa. This line would be delimited on the spot by a Joint Commission.

The territories west of that line after being deflected as mentioned in the preceding paragraph would be recognised as French. This would give to France a connected territory, comprising Northern Gurunsi, Mossi, Gurma, Libtako, Yagha, Torode, so much of Say as lies west of the Niger, and a considerable portion of Borgu including Nikki west of the 1896 line.

As to access to the Niger, Her Majesty's Government would endeavour to meet the wishes of the French Government—

(a.) By amending the Regulations for the Navigation of the Niger, so as to remove any restrictions which may be found to exist to the disadvantage of French trade, and by making an arrangement under which, subject to proper Regulations for the protection of the Customs, the transit of merchandise (other than arms and ammunition and trade spirits) across British territory to and from Nikki and a point on the river between the Moshi River and Leaba would be exempt from the payment of import or export duties.

(b.) By an Agreement similar to that contained in the recent Agreement between France and Germany in regard to Togoland, to allow French invalids, accompanied by an escort, to pass freely through British territories to the Niger. This Agreement to be for a short term, as in the German case.

(c.) By granting to the French Government a lease of a small piece of land at a convenient spot on the Niger, where they may make a wharf and erect warehouses, or other purely commercial buildings, as may be necessary, it being understood that such land and buildings are and remain subject to British jurisdiction and to British Customs Regulations.

The fiscal arrangement proposed by Her Majesty's Government is that the Tariffs of the British and French territories respectively should apply to all merchandise alike, irrespective of origin, and that no charges should be imposed on British merchants in a French Colony, or on French merchants in a British Colony, beyond those payable by the nationals of either Colony. The same duties would thus be levied on goods of British and of French origin in British and French territories respectively, but the rates in the two territories would not necessarily be identical. The arrangement would apply to all the British and all the French possessions from the western frontier of the Ivory Coast to the eastern frontier of the Niger Coast Protectorate, to possessions on the coast as well as to those in the interior. It would embody the special commercial arrangements between the two countries already existing in West Africa, and would be drawn up by Commissioners selected by the respective Governments.

Before concluding this despatch, it is necessary that I should allude to the communications which have passed relating to the territories east of the Niger. The position of Her Majesty's Government in these regions has been defined by Agreement with France, and the withdrawal by the French Commissioners of the conditional assurance in regard to that Agreement, which was recorded in your Excellency's despatch No. 394, Africa, of the 27th November last, and accepted in my despatch No. 406 of the 9th December, makes it incumbent upon me to remove all doubt as regards that position.

Your Excellency has already pointed out to M. Hanotaux on more than one occasion that the Say-Barruwa line laid down in the Agreement was entered into by Her Majesty's Government to define the spheres of influence of Great Britain and France to the south and north of it respectively. You should now remind his Excellency of these communications, and state that Her Majesty's Government decline to admit that their rights are in any doubt.

Any incursion of a French force into the territories lying between the Niger and Lake Chad and south of the Say-Barruwa line would be a distinct breach of that Agreement, and be regarded by Her Majesty's Government as the invasion of a territory to which their rights have been recognised by a Convention between Great Britain and France.

Her Majesty's Government cannot doubt that, on reconsideration, the Government of the Republic will recognise the justice of the British view, and will give assurances which will remove the anxiety now caused by the existence of so serious a difference between the two countries.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, February 19, 1898.

F.O. France (Africa) 3416.

D. 2·10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 26.) Africa.

R. 3·30 P.M.

Niger Conference. My telegram No. 23 of yesterday. M. Hanotaux appears to have communicated to Cabinet this morning the substance of proposals made by British Commissioners yesterday.

The fiscal proposals meet with strenuous opposition on the part of Prime Minister and the Cabinet in general, but are entirely approved by M. Hanotaux who by no means despairs of carrying them.

He seems to anticipate more difficulty on the fiscal than on the territorial points although he says Minister of Colonies shows great disinclination to yield on latter.

He would not speak out as to his own opinion but I gather that he looks upon the general proposal as fairly acceptable and he is clearly most anxious for a settlement.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France (Africa) 3408.

(No. 100.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 20, 1898.

On the 22nd ultimo I received a letter from the Royal Niger Company, stating that a telegram had reached them from the Niger Territories to the effect that a French force from Say had raided Madecali, seized slaves, and sold them at Ilo.

The position of Madecali is on the left bank of the Niger above Ilo, and is therefore, in the territory reserved to Great Britain by the Agreement of 1890, and within the sphere of action of the Royal Niger Company. Her Majesty's Government feel sure that the proceedings of the French forces as above stated have not been authorised by the French Government, and they have informed the Governor of the Royal Niger Company that he is at liberty to take any steps which may be necessary to prevent their recurrence.

Your Excellency should so inform M. Hanotaux.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3411.

(No. 75.) Africa. Confidential.

Paris, D. February 20, 1898.

My Lord,

R. February 21, 1898.

M. Hanotaux adverted yesterday to the previous day's sitting of the Niger Conference, and although he did not seem inclined to discuss the proposals made by the British Commissioners, nor to pronounce any decided opinion in regard to them. I judged from his tone and manner that he thought them fairly acceptable. . . . [personal details].

At any rate, he felt more than ever that the time is come when these West African disputes must be settled, and he assured me that I might count upon his strenuous endeavours to bring about a satisfactory settlement.

And, indeed, although no one knows better than I do how impolitic it is to trust M. Hanotaux implicitly, I do in this instance believe him. I learn from several quarters that he realises the inexpediency, not to say the danger, of not coming to terms now; and I do not think that he is the sort of Minister who would incline to divert public attention from domestic difficulties by engaging in strife abroad. In this direction his sentiments are, I imagine, shared by his colleagues in the Administration; and, as far as I could elicit from him yesterday, all the influence which the President of the Republic can exert upon the Cabinet will be employed to support M. Hanotaux's view as to the solution of the West African difficulty.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 169.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France (Africa) 3408.

(No. 101.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 21, 1898.

With reference to my despatch No. 100, Africa, of the 20th instant, I regret to have to inform your Excellency that I learn from the Royal Niger Company that a cablegram was received by them on the afternoon of the 20th instant from Mr. Agent-General Wallace, stating that he had received news that forty French coloured troops, with one white officer, had crossed the Niger and advanced as far as Jagga, which is about 140 miles to the south-west of Wurnu, the capital of the Sokoto Empire, while 100 more coloured troops with four white officers had also crossed and reached Argungu. It is further stated that French officials have been trying to negotiate with the Sultan of Sokoto, but that he has refused all negotiations, or to permit them to advance towards his capital.

I have to instruct your Excellency to protest in the strongest terms to M. Hanotaux against the violation of the Agreement of 1890, under which the Kingdom of Sokoto is placed within the sphere of action of the Niger Company, and to say that instructions have been given to support the Sultan of Sokoto and to enforce the retirement of the invading forces from the territory reserved to Great Britain by the Agreement of 1890.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 170.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3411.

(No. 79.) Africa.

My Lord,

Paris, D. February 22, 1898.

R. February 23, 1898.

I forwarded to your Lordship by post last night copy of the note which I had placed in M. Hanotaux's hands yesterday afternoon respecting the reported advance of the French into Argungu and Sokoto, and I have now the honour to report that as soon as I saw in the morning papers yesterday the telegrams announcing this advance, I took measures to obtain an interview with his Excellency.

It was not, however, until half-past four that M. Hanotaux found himself able to receive me. When he did so I lost no time in expressing to him the great concern with which I had read the press telegrams, which, if true, would indicate a step on the part of the French calculated to bring about the gravest results. Under any circumstances, I said, it was my duty to inform him at once, and in the most explicit manner, of the views of Her Majesty's Government in regard to any French movement such as that reported, and I must therefore ask him to read the note which I put into his hand, and of which I explained the important paragraphs by furnishing him at the same time with an unofficial French translation.

M. Hanotaux assured me that he knew nothing of any such movement, and did not believe it to be true. He pointed out that the whole attitude of the French Government during the pending negotiations belied their supposed intention of acting on the left bank of the Niger. They had long ago showed, by the instructions given to their Commissioners, that they were ready to leave the regions east of that river alone. At any rate, he could affirm that if any French force were moving as reported (and he repeated that he did not for a moment believe it), such movement would have been undertaken without the authority and against the wishes of the Government of the Republic.

Materially, he did not think it possible for any French officers to be in the position reported. . . .

M. Hanotaux observed that he believed that the report had been concocted by the Niger Company's agents for its own ends, or that it was a mischievous and interested fabrication recklessly manufactured for speculative purposes. . . .

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 171.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, February 24, 1898.

D. 10.45 P.M.

R. February 25, 8 A.M.

F.O. France (Africa) 3416.

Tel. (No. 32.) Africa.

Niger negotiations.

French Commissioner handed in reply to our proposals of the 18th February.

On Gold Coast they demand retention of Bona and Lobi, the frontier to the eastward being carried by northern boundaries of Wa and Liaba to Mamprussi.

On Lagos side they agree to British proposals on condition of prolongation of 1896 line northward across river.

They also request that question of territorial access to the Niger may be reconsidered.

Fiscal arrangement appears to be the greatest obstacle to acceptance of British proposals.

If this were eliminated from arrangement there might perhaps still remain a chance of other terms being accepted.

British Commissioners declined to refer home the territorial demands, but undertook to report fiscal difficulty.

. . . . No date fixed for next meeting, nor can British Commissioners propose day until informed whether fiscal arrangement is regarded as a *sine qua non*.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3393.

(No. 109.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Paris, February 26, 1898.

. . . . During the last few days I have had conversations of considerable length with the Ambassadors of the Triple Alliance. . . .

. . . . What I desire to report is that my three colleagues are of opinion that the present temper of France is a standing danger and menace to Europe; that her relations with other countries are becoming abnormal; that she is recurring to the frame of mind of one hundred years ago, when she looked upon the rest of Europe as banded against her, and when she had but the one thought with which she is now possessed, that between herself and destruction there stand only her army. There is a general wrongheadedness which may be called madness, they think, in France, which is dangerous to herself and to her internal tranquillity is dangerous also to her neighbours; and against the consequences of which those neighbours should take early precautions. Both my German and my Italian colleagues spoke warmly in this sense to me only yesterday.

There are other intelligent observers, Frenchmen as well as foreigners, who are losing all hope that France can much longer escape an internal convulsion; a convulsion in which the Army will take a prominent part, and which will equally be followed by a foreign war. Any such Frenchmen fear that another foreign war may mean the complete ruin of France, at the hands of those who will not give her a second chance of resurrection. They talk, too, of the utter corruption of the politicians, as well as of the business classes; of the demoralisation and cynicism of the people at large; of the general rottenness of the State. They say that such appeals as that of M. Méline in the Chamber yesterday reveal the consciousness of the Government of the frightful instability of the existing system, and their apprehension of a coming catastrophe. Such gloomy forebodings may be heard on all sides; but as it is not always the case that those who are nearest have the clearest view, I only report all these conjectures for what they are worth as the speculations of impressionable observers.

What I do agree with is the opinion that the public temper is dangerously irritable, and especially against foreign countries; and none the less so that the new Ally, Russia, is suspected of already regretting having entered into a *mésalliance*. In the flurry of excitement and under the influence of the irascibility of the Army it might be a relief to France to pick a quarrel with the one Great European Power who cannot invade her, perennial jealousy of whom supplies almost as ample ground for vindictiveness as is furnished against Germany by the memory of the last international struggle.

Such considerations cannot be overlooked by those who are at the present time engaged in conducting negotiations with France upon a subject the treatment of which requires no little patience, tact and foresight.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3412.

(No. 100.) Africa.

My Lord,

Paris, D. March 6, 1898.

R. March 7, 1898.

I lost no time this morning in seeking an interview with M. Hanotaux, who came at half-past eleven to meet me at the Quai d'Orsay.

On my communicating to him the substance of your Lordship's telegram respecting the reported presence of a force of six French European officers, 300 soldiers, and 700 carriers in Argungu, and their demand for the surrender of the person of the King, and their threat that in default they would destroy the town, M. Hanotaux said with great warmth that in view of the solemn assurances which he had given me a fortnight ago, such representations should not have been made to him. He could not understand how Her Majesty's Government could continue to accept as truth the evident falsehoods of the Niger Company.

I pointed out to his Excellency that Colonel Pilcher is an Imperial officer holding military command at Lokoja, and that the news sent by him is very circumstantial.

M. Hanotaux, however, rejoined that Colonel Pilcher could only have got his information from the black agents of the Niger Company, upon whose trustworthiness he said he could not admit that dependence could be placed as against that of the French authorities. The existence of the reported expeditionary force was materially impossible, as there are not the means to form it. There are but thirty men at Ilo, and the posts along the river are all composed of even much smaller force. . . .

He could not understand, he said, why Her Majesty's Government did not energetically repress the systematic attempts to create difficulties, and generally to make mischief, practised by the Niger Company.

I said that I was sorry to be obliged to believe that M. Hanotaux, like the generality of his countrymen, did not realise that the English public is greatly stirred by this West African question, and that the circumstances under which we find ourselves in that region do not allow us to sit quietly down without protesting.

M. Hanotaux replied that he did realise that the agitation had become very strong, but that he must attribute it to the machinations of the Niger Company. He must, however, tell me decidedly that he at any rate was not going to waste any more time upon their insinuations, he was devoting every effort which he could personally make to bring about a satisfactory solution, and using all his influence to moderate the violence of the press. But he really began to despair of the result, and sometimes even to doubt whether his desire for an amicable result was reciprocated by Her Majesty's Government.

I said that Her Majesty's Government had been very conciliatory, but that there was a certain point beyond which they could make no concessions.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 174.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3412.

Private.

Dear Lord Salisbury,

Paris, D. March 16, 1898.

R. March 17, 1898.

At the close of a long conversation upon other matters yesterday, M. Hanotaux suddenly produced a paper, which he told me he had devoted the Sunday to sketch out, and which was a "Projet de Convention" for the settlement of the Niger question. He said no one had seen it except his Assistant Private Secretary, who had copied it out fair.

I asked him if the document was for me, but he replied that he could not do more than let me see it, as it was not yet communicated to any of his colleagues, not even the Colonial Minister.

I looked through it with him, and said that there were certainly territorial arrangements to which we could not consent, but that some of the other points seemed fairly acceptable.

M. Hanotaux replied that the territorial arrangements had been sketched by him on what he believed to be the general lines of our proposals, but that, of course, they would form the basis of discussion and subsequent decision. His idea had been that instead of prolonging the discussion of Treaties, &c., which seemed to be interminable, it would be more practical to put down on paper something concrete for the Commissioners to work upon in the shape of a Convention. He did not go further than suggest that in it might be found material upon which the Commissioners could usefully work, and he had thought that putting it in the shape of a sketch of a Convention would be the best means of placing it before them, as in that form it presented a clearer view of the *pros* and *cons* of the whole question.

I said that if he liked to let me have a copy of it to-day, I could send it to you privately by messenger. He would not promise to do so, as he thought he must, at any rate, first consult M. Lebon. Nevertheless, he has done so this morning, with a private letter, of which I enclose a copy.

I have handed over this "esquisse de projet" to the Niger Commissioners for their remarks, which I hope to send to you with this letter. The territorial arrangements are quite unacceptable as they stand, and, if we are to make use of this draft, I should think that the best plan would be to prepare a counter-project of Convention embodying in their place the maximum of our demands and let the Commissioners produce it for discussion.

I am so far of M. Hanotaux's opinion that I think it would conduce to accelerated discussion *now* if the Commissioners on both sides were authorised to discuss such a draft, and as M. Hanotaux gave me to understand that he had sketched the territorial arrangements without consulting even his own Commissioners, and that he was aware that they would require remodelling I hope that the French Government will give way upon all those points which are clearly inadmissible, such, for instance, as would be involved in the prolongation of the line across the Niger which, as proposed by M. Hanotaux, would give France an enormous triangle east of Say; such also as the proposed confines of Boussa, and the proposed frontier of the Gold Coast Hinterland.

Your very truly,
EDMUND MONSON.

No. 175.

Mr. Balfour to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France (Africa) 3408.

10, Downing Street, Whitehall, S.W.,

Dear Sir Edward Monson,

March 28 1898.

The diplomatic difficulties which surround the settlement of the West African question arise in the main from two causes: the first of which is inherent in the local situation and cannot by any ingenuity be wholly evaded, the second of which is apparently due to a misconception by the French Government of the position taken up by England.

The local difficulty is due, of course, to the fact that large tracts of country are not merely claimed by both Powers, but, in a chequered and imperfect fashion, are actually occupied by both. So that no settlement is possible which does not involve on the part of both a withdrawal of the flag—a course which cannot by any procedure be made palatable to the Government or to the Peoples of either.

The misconception however it should not be impossible to diminish or to dissipate. It arises I think from a belief on the part of the French Government that our original proposition represented, not the territorial arrangement which we might fairly expect to obtain from an impartial arbitrator, but the extended and more dubious claims which at the beginning of a negotiation are sometimes put forward to supply material for subsequent bargaining. The inevitable result of this is that any paring down of our demands cuts, as it were, into the quick; and that however anxious we may be to meet the wishes of the French Government by modifying the character of our proposals we can hardly be expected seriously to diminish their extent.

The misunderstanding has produced consequences which are to be regretted. It has, as I gather from your despatches led M. Hanotaux to interpret our rejection of various French proposals as an indication that we were less desirous than himself of bringing the negotiations to a speedy and amicable close. It has certainly produced on our side feelings of disappointment at least as serious. For it is to this no doubt that we must attribute the frequent re-appearance of propositions which we had already declared to be, from our point of view, quite inadmissible. And to this also is due the fact that concessions, which in our judgment could only be accepted as integral portions of a particular scheme for general settlement, have more than once been considered in isolation by the French Government, and have seemingly been treated by them as forming convenient bases from which new concessions might fairly be demanded.

As an illustration of this last proposition I may remind you of the discussion which has taken place in regard to the region lying Eastward of Lake Chad. No proposition on the subject appears in our draft project which accompanies this letter. And the reason is this: we were quite prepared to settle all questions likely to produce international differences respecting the territories between Lake Chad and the Nile: and to this end proposed to recognise French claims East of the Lake if they would recognise our claims in the Valley of the Nile. They meet us by rejecting, with no excess of courtesy, the half of the proposal which is to our advantage: and then repeat, without modification, the other half, as if the Valley of the Nile had never been so much as mentioned between us. Under these circumstances we have no choice but to drop for the present all attempts to avoid the complication which may hereafter arise in the Eastern regions which have been under discussion, and to content ourselves with an endeavour to come to some arrangements about the other questions in dispute between the two countries in W. Africa.

I beg to remain,

Your truly,

ARTHUR JAMES BALFOUR.

No. 176.

British Draft Counter-Project

F.O. France (Africa) 3416.
Confidential.

April 4, 1898.

Sketch of the Communication which might be made by Sir E. Monson or the Commissioners on presenting the Counter-Draft.

(As given to Mr. Gosselin for communication, April 4, 1898.)

Her Majesty's Government have carefully examined the sketch of a draft Convention which has been unofficially communicated to Sir E. Monson.

They regret they do not find in it as it stands an acceptable basis of discussion, because the territorial arrangements which it proposes are materially in excess of what they feel themselves justified in entertaining, and because the engagement for equal

treatment of British and French commerce is only offered for a period of ten years, while the territorial arrangements are permanent, and the leases of British territory and other commercial facilities to France are demanded for a period of ninety-nine years.

A Project of Convention has been prepared for examination by the French negotiators based upon the proposals of Her Majesty's Government. They do not feel able to accept any material modification of these proposals otherwise than in exchange for countervailing concessions, but the language of the French draft has been adopted as far as is compatible with this view, and the stipulation for a French entrepôt at the mouth of the Niger, which is in excess of the offer first made by Her Majesty's Government, has been added in a spirit of conciliation.

Projet de Convention.

ARTICLE I.

To the north of the Gold Coast and Ivory Coast the line of demarcation starting from the extremity of the present frontier on the 9th degree of north latitude shall be drawn as to place (Mossi and the northern part of Gurunsi within the French sphere, whilst Bona, Lobi, the southern part of Gurunsi, Mamprussi and all territory lying between any of these districts and the 9th parallel of latitude would be included in the British sphere.)*

ARTICLE II.

To the north of Lagos and Dahomey the line of demarcation shall start from the extremity of the present frontier on the 9th degree of north latitude, and shall be drawn northwards so as to include in the British sphere the territories of Béré and Okuta, together with the towns of Ashigere and Bete. It will follow generally the direction of the 1st meridian of longitude east of Paris (3° 20' east of Greenwich), thus leaving Nikki and the surrounding district within the French sphere, but will be deflected so as to touch the Niger at a point ten miles to the north of the town of Illo, leaving within the British sphere all territory belonging to the Province of Boussa and the district of Gomba.

ARTICLE III.

The line of demarcation set forth in Articles I and II are indicated in their general features on the map annexed to the present Convention, and will be delimited on the spot by Joint Commissions.

ARTICLE IV.

The French Government engage that the King of Mossi, towards whom Great Britain has Treaty engagements, and who has appealed to Her Britannic Majesty's Government for protection, shall be allowed to resume his former position, or, if this should prove impracticable, that adequate compensation shall be given him.†

Her Britannic Majesty's Government agree, on their part, to treat with consideration ("bienveillance") the chiefs who will be under their authority, and towards whom France may have entered into similar Treaty engagements.

* In case Article VII should be rejected, the following would be substituted for the portion in brackets :—

" (Within the British sphere Mossi, Gurunsi, Bona, Lobi, Mamprussi, and all territory lying between any of these districts and the 9th parallel of latitude.)"

† In case Article VII should be rejected, an article would be substituted to the following effect :—

" The two Governments engage reciprocally to treat with consideration (' bienveillance ') the native chiefs who, having had Treaties with one Power, shall, in virtue of the present Arrangement, come under the jurisdiction of the other."

ARTICLE V.

§ 1. Her Britannic Majesty's Government agree to grant to the Government of the French Republic for a period of _____ years a lease of a piece of land at a convenient spot on the Niger between Leaba and the confluence of the river Mossi with the Niger, where the latter Government may make a wharf and erect warehouses or other purely commercial buildings as may be necessary. Such land and buildings shall be subject to British jurisdiction and British Regulations, but the transit of merchandise (other than arms, ammunition, and trade spirits) across British territory between this spot and Nikki or any other point which the French Government may select on their frontier west of the Niger shall be exempt from the payment of import, export, and transit duties.

§ 2. A copy of the lease shall be annexed to the present Convention.

§ 3. For the period mentioned in paragraph 1 of this article a piece of land at one of the mouths of the Niger shall be reserved as an entrepôt for French commerce, subject always to British jurisdiction and Regulations.

ARTICLE VI.

Her Majesty's Government undertake to examine, in concert with the French Government, the existing Regulations for the navigation of the River Niger, with the view to remove any restrictions to the disadvantage of French commerce which they may mutually recognise to be inconsistent with the terms of the Act of Navigation for the Niger, contained in the General Act of the Conference of Berlin of the 26th February, 1885.

It is understood that any facilities granted by Great Britain to France on the Middle and Lower Niger shall be reciprocally granted by France to Great Britain on the Middle and Upper Niger.

ARTICLE VII.

In the Colonies of the Gold Coast and Lagos, and in the different territories under British sovereignty or protection on the east of the Niger as defined in Article VIII of this Convention, and on the west of that river as defined in Articles I and II, as also in the Colonies of the Ivory Coast and of Dahomey, and the regions under French sovereignty or protection situated west and south of the Niger as far as the 10th meridian west of Paris (8° 40' west of Greenwich), British and French merchants, and merchandise the produce or manufacture of the dominions, possessions, and protectorates of both High Contracting Parties, shall enjoy identic treatment.

Subject to this condition, each of the two High Contracting Parties shall be free to fix within their own sphere the Tariff of imports and exports duties to be levied therein.

N.B.—If this Article VII should be objected to, Articles I and IV would be modified in the manner stated in the notes appended to those articles.

ARTICLE VIII.

It is understood that the lines drawn from Say on the Niger to Barrua on Lake Chad, and deflected where necessary to the north in such a manner as to comprise in the British sphere all that fairly belongs to the Kingdom of Sokoto, which is mentioned in Article II of the Declaration between the British and French Governments signed at London on the 5th August, 1890, shall be recognised as the line of demarcation separating the British and French spheres between the Niger and Lake Chad, and that it shall be determined forthwith by the Commissioners of the two Governments.

The Government of the French Republic recognise as British the territory enclosed between the Say-Barrua line, the parallel of latitude passing through Barrua eastwards as far as the intersection with the meridian passing 35' east of the centre of the town of Kuka, the above-mentioned meridian southwards as far as the southern shore of Lake Chad, the German boundary, the Niger, and the sea.

No. 177.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3413.

(No. 154.) Africa.

My Lord,

Paris, D. May 1, 1898.

R. May 3, 1898.

With reference to Mr. Gosselin's despatch No. 153, Africa, of the 27th ultimo, I have the honour to enclose herewith a despatch addressed to me by the British Niger Commissioners reporting the proceedings of the twenty-ninth meeting of the Commission held on the 29th ultimo at the Ministry for Foreign Affairs.

The British Commissioners have now in conjunction with their colleagues finished the perusal of the first seven Articles of the British draft Counter-Project, which was communicated by me to M. Hanotaux on the 6th ultimo.

These seven Articles are those which affect an arrangement between the two countries on the west of the Niger, and since, according to the agreement made between the Commissioners at the meeting of the Niger Commission, held on the 26th November, 1897, which was approved by your Lordship on the 9th December, the arrangement respecting territories to the east of the Niger depended on the negotiations respecting the territories to the west of the Niger being carried to a successful issue, it seems probable that any serious discussion relative to Article VIII of the draft Counter-Project will be postponed by the French Commissioners until an agreement between the two countries respecting Articles I to VII has been arrived at.

It is doubtless for this reason that the French Commissioners are pressing their colleagues for copies of the leases and of the revised Regulations for the navigation of the Niger.

Since the present moment is, from the French point of view, most propitious for the settlement of difficulties with foreign Powers, I earnestly request that no time may be lost in communicating to me these documents.

Considering the somewhat pessimistic view of the British draft Counter-Project which was taken by M. Hanotaux and Baron de Courcel on first perusal, I cannot help expressing some surprise at the length to which, according to the recent reports of the British Commissioners, the French Government are prepared to go.

As regards the territorial question west of the Niger, the British proposals are accepted in their entirety, provided that Her Majesty's Government would reconsider the question of the possession of Bona.

In this connection I should be glad to direct your Lordship's attention to the enclosed copy of the War Office Map No. 992, which was furnished to Her Majesty's Commissioners in 1896 for their guidance, and on which the views of Her Majesty's Government at that time as to the lines of delimitation are depicted.

On referring to this map, your Lordship will observe that notwithstanding the very extensive tract of territory which has been occupied by France since that date, and from much of which their troops will now have to retire, and notwithstanding the insertion of a Fiscal Arrangement which is exceedingly unpalatable to the French Government, France is willing to agree to a frontier which, in rear of the Gold Coast Colony, was considered by Her Majesty's Government in 1896 to be equitable, and, in rear of the Colony of Lagos, to represent our maximum demands.

As regards the Fiscal Arrangement, I agree with the British Commissioners that the period of duration is as long a one as could reasonably be expected. I am unable at this moment to remember any arrangement of an analogous character being sanctioned by any Government for a longer period. I am bound to add, and in this I think your Lordship will agree with me, that, considering its nature, it was hardly to be supposed that France would agree to its application to the very large extent of French territory, which was indicated in the Counter-Project.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 178.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France (Africa) 3409.

(No. 225.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 6. 1898.

Her Majesty's Government have considered the Reports contained in your Excellency's despatches . . .⁽¹⁾, recording the proceedings at the 27th, 28th and 29th meetings of the Niger Commissioners, when the first seven Articles of the British counter-draft were discussed.

The discussions appear to show that the French Government are prepared to accept all the British proposals with regard to the territories in dispute on the west of the Niger, subject to the following exceptions :—

- (a.) They desire that Bona and Lobi should be included in the French sphere :
- (b.) They desire that the French territory to which the fiscal arrangement will apply should be reduced to a comparatively small area ;
- (c.) They propose that the duration of the fiscal arrangement, and also that of the leases to be granted on the Niger, should be limited to thirty years ;
- (d.) They ask that they should be allowed to send troops to or from French territory by way of the Niger, it being understood that any troops so sent would be unarmed ; and
- (e.) They ask to see the drafts of the leases and Regulations mentioned in Article V of the counter-draft of the Convention.

On these several points I have to inform your Excellency as follows :—

- (a.) Her Majesty's Government are not willing to give up Bona and Lobi, and as they attach great importance to this point, a further and fuller statement of their views will probably be addressed to you.
- (b.) They are anxious that the British Commissioners should make another attempt to get Mossi included in the fiscal arrangement. They might point out that Her Majesty's Government also have public opinion to satisfy ; that Mossi is represented to them as essential to the commercial interests of the Gold Coast ; and that, although it may be unlikely that British merchants will do any trade with Mossi, yet it will go towards justifying the surrender of the claim of Her Majesty's Government to the territory if they can include Mossi in the fiscal arrangement.
- (c.) Her Majesty's Government agree to thirty years as the limit of the fiscal arrangement and leases.
- (d.) They think that the passage of French troops unarmed might, if necessary, be agreed to, but they do not like the arrangement, and would not agree to

⁽¹⁾ Reference numbers of despatches omitted.

it if it could be avoided. They would certainly not agree to it unless Bona and Lobi are recognised as British. Accoutrements, arms and warlike stores would have to go through as baggage, and would not necessarily go through with the troops. A separate application for the transit of troops would in each case have to be made to Her Majesty's Government.

(e.) A further despatch will be addressed to your Excellency in regard to the terms of the Transit Regulations and the leases.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 179.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3395.

(No. 242.) Very Confidential.

Paris, D. May 19, 1898.

My Lord.

R. May 21, 1898.

I had a short conversation with M. Hanotaux yesterday upon the all-absorbing topic of Mr. Chamberlain's Birmingham speech. . . .

He went on to say that, although he was in a measure unable to understand the whole purport of the speech, he had not fallen into the error which seemed to be prevalent in Paris, and especially in the high financial world, that it was to be taken as a direct menace to France. He of course had the advantage, not enjoyed by the outside public, of knowing that at this moment the two Governments are assiduously engaged in a loyal attempt to settle their West African differences. It would therefore be ridiculous on his part to suppose that Her Majesty's Secretary of State for the Colonies would choose such an opportunity, when a satisfactory agreement appears fairly in sight, for employing threatening language which might frustrate the labour of months.

M. Hanotaux assumed therefore that the sole object of Mr. Chamberlain was to warn his audience of the antagonism of interests which seemed recently to have accentuated itself between England and Russia in the Far East: and he proceeded to explain in very cautious language that, although he could not but consider that there were idiomatic or proverbial expressions in the Birmingham Speech which an euphemistic diplomatist might look upon as misplaced, he could not be surprised that the course of events in China had led to critical comment of some severity on the part of an English Cabinet Minister. . . .

He, however, glided very lightly over these points, being far more anxious, apparently, to insist upon the sincerity of his desire to dissipate the apprehensions entertained here as to the actual state of the relations between England and France. He acknowledged that there had been almost a panic in the financial and commercial world: and observed that the necessity for maintaining secrecy on the progress of the West African negotiations made it very difficult for him to correct their misapprehensions. He was all the more solicitous therefore that we should expedite the discussion as much as possible: and he had another reason for his urgency consisting in his very natural wish to sign the agreement himself. . . .

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.⁽¹⁾

F.O. France (Africa) 3412.

(No. 193.) Africa.

My Lord,

Paris, D. June 3, 1898.

R. June 4, 1898.

M. Hanotaux sent for me late in the evening of the day before yesterday, to state that as it appeared that the only point which stood in the way of a final settlement of the West African negotiations were connected with the proprietorship of Illo and with the Transit and Navigation Regulations, he thought that a direct appeal to your Lordship, explaining his position, might facilitate a speedy conclusion.

His Excellency, who spoke with unusual calmness and self-command, said that with regard to Illo he believed that both sides must know very well that in itself the retention of this place by the one or the other was unimportant. He would personally be happy to let us keep it; but he must confess that he simply dared not. Since the death of the French officer, who was unfortunately killed there a few months ago, the place had assumed a sentimental value in French estimation, against which it was useless for him to attempt to struggle. He did not dispute that it was only a question of sentiment for France, but unluckily such a question is more insurmountable than anything else. He regretted, therefore, to have to state categorically that it was impossible for him to give way about Illo.

If Her Majesty's Government would meet him on this point he would accept all that they might propose to him on the other.

M. Hanotaux asked me to telegraph this to your Lordship, and said that he proposed to send a telegram in the same sense to his Minister in London.

I told him that Her Majesty's Government were very decided ("raide") about Illo, and that I could only undertake to inform your Lordship of what he had said, but could make no further promise.

Although M. Hanotaux minimised the importance of Illo in the observations which he made to me, it is, I believe, none the less the case that this town is situated on a trade route.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

(¹) Expanded from a telegram of the 1st June.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3413.

(No. 197.) Africa.

My Lord,

Paris, D. June 5, 1898.

R. June 6, 1898.

I received yesterday evening your Lordship's Telegram No. 16 Africa, despatched from London that afternoon, conveying to me the decision of Her Majesty's Government in regard to the retention of Illo, and to the other conditions held by them to be essential to the satisfactory termination of the West African negotiations.

After most anxious and careful consideration of the form in which this decision should be made known to the French Government, I decided upon addressing to M. Hanotaux a Note in which, for the purpose of clearly establishing our Position, the course of the negotiation for the last fortnight should be recapitulated, and its successive stages placed succinctly before His Excellency. . .

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Enclosure in No. 181.

Sir E. Monson to M. Hanotaux.

M. le Ministre,

Paris, June 5, 1898.

I did not fail to communicate to Her Majesty's Government the explanations which your Excellency did me the honour to give me on the 1st instant, of the difficulty in which the French Government finds itself as to the retention of Ilo within the territory which will be recognised as British in the Agreement between the two countries as to the delimitation of their respective possessions in West Africa.

I am now desired to state to your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government are not able to give up Ilo; but as they have understood from the reports of the British Commissioners that the main objection to the arrangement, as it now stands, lies in the retention by Great Britain of the two places, viz., Bona and Ilo, where French officers have lost their lives in the service of their country, and that also any delimitation of the western frontier of the Gold Coast Hinterland which involved taking that frontier westward of the Black Volta would, in the opinion of the French Commissioners, have the appearance of an encroachment on French territory if drawn on a map, Her Majesty's Government are willing, in order to close the negotiations, to lay a fresh proposal before the French Government. . . .

Her Majesty's Government would, however, be exceedingly grieved if, after so many months of laborious work, no solution of the difficulties existing between the two countries in these regions should be arrived at; and rather than that such an unfortunate circumstance should occur they are now willing to abandon, in addition to that portion of the districts of Bona and Lobi which lie to the west of the watershed separating the Volta and Komoe basins, the portion of these districts lying to the east of that watershed, and to accept the western branch of the Volta River (commonly called the Black Volta) as the frontier separating their possessions between the 9th and 11th parallels of latitude.

As compensation for this further abandonment of territory, Her Majesty's Government require:—

1. That, as originally proposed by the British Commissioners, the circumference of a circle drawn from the town of Sokoto, with a radius of 100 miles, should be the frontier separating the spheres of influence of the two countries to the north of that town;
2. That the proprietorship of Simitia should be settled in favour of Great Britain; and
3. That a satisfactory settlement should be arrived at with respect to the Transit and Navigation Regulations.

The offer which I am now instructed to make in the foregoing terms represents the extent to which Her Majesty's Government are prepared to go in their desire to close the negotiation in a satisfactory manner; and if it is not accepted I am to state that they will be forced to conclude that they have been mistaken in believing that the Government of the Republic desire the success of the negotiation.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On the 8th June, M. Hanotaux informed Sir E. Monson "that he had instructed the French Commissioners to enter entirely into the views stated in my note to him of the 5th instant, and went on to express his gratification that the decision of H[is] M[ajesty's] Government had put it in his power to take this action. His Excellency said that had H[is] M[ajesty's] Government insisted on the retention of both Bona and Ilo, he must have declined to continue the negotiation, as he could never have signed a convention containing those two provisions. . . . " F.O. France (Africa) 3414, No. 203, Africa, of June 8, 1898.]

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3414.

(No. 212.) Africa.

(No. 40.) Treaty.

My Lord,

Paris, D. June 15, 1898.

R. June 16, 1898.

The Protocol which was yesterday signed by the British and French Niger Commissioners, and embodied in the Convention subsequently signed by M. Hanotaux and myself, is the product of nearly eight months' anxious and laborious negotiation. Whatever may be the reception accorded to this Agreement by public opinion in Great Britain and France, there can be no doubt that its provisions have been most carefully and deliberately considered by both Governments, and that they have not been arrived at without the most minute examination and appreciation of the rights on which they have been founded, as well as of the advantages which may confidently be expected to result from their adoption, and of the evils and dangers which they have with equal confidence been designed to counteract.

The negotiations now happily terminated were begun under extremely discouraging conditions. Not only were the claims put forward on either side directly conflicting, but they had long been urged with unflinching pertinacity, and were rendered more dangerous by the circumstance that they were locally supported by the armed forces of the disputants stationed, for the most part, in such remote and inaccessible localities as to render their control by the home Governments matter of exceeding difficulty. Moreover, in several instances steps had been taken and movements made by those same armed forces, especially by those of the French, which in effect differed but little from positively belligerent acts; and the demands made for reparation for unjustifiable encroachments, unprovoked invasions and other such-like proceedings in defiance or in disregard of our asserted rights and interests being met by no satisfactory or conciliatory rejoinders, served only to embitter the discussion and to create still more numerous differences and difficulties.

The solution of the questions at issue was not rendered easier by the unavoidable introduction of considerations of national pride and national honour which require always far more delicate treatment than such as are concerned with material interests alone. Indeed, it has been a peculiar feature of this negotiation that the obstacles to its final settlement have been caused far more by the considerations just referred to than by the difficulty of equitably apportioning, on the basis of intrinsic value, the various territories in dispute. I venture to express the opinion that it has been not the least of the merits of those engaged in this arduous discussion that, while never relaxing the steadiness and the dignity of their attitude, they have not allowed themselves to assume, even in the warmest fervour of advocacy, a tone or a manner which would have imperilled the continuance of the negotiation.

It would be out of place for me to enlarge upon the value of the various details of an arrangement which has been concluded under the direct auspices of Her Majesty's Government, and the relative advantages and disadvantages of which have been maturely weighed by them during the months which have elapsed since the commencement of the negotiations. I venture nevertheless to state that, in my own opinion, there can be no doubt that, given the position in which the two Governments found themselves last October, and the evident difficulty of arranging for the withdrawal of armed forces occupying territory over which both insisted that they had irrefutable claims, it is a matter of congratulation for Her Majesty's Government that they have succeeded in obtaining that, which at the outset, it appeared impossible, or at the least supremely improbable, would ever be recognised as theirs: while the fiscal arrangements to which the Government of the Republic has given its assent, and upon which Her Majesty's Government have set such store, constitute in principle so signal a departure from the economical system hitherto pursued by France, that the British negotiators would have been completely justified in apprehending that they would never

be able to persuade their French colleagues of the interest which would accrue to both countries by their adoption.

I cannot, therefore, but congratulate Her Majesty's Government upon the result of a negotiation which I am well aware has at times severely taxed their patience and forbearance; and of the utility of the further prosecution of which they must have often doubted. As for myself, I confess that there have been many moments when I should have despaired of arriving at a satisfactory termination had I not been convinced that M. Hanotaux and his colleagues in the Government were thoroughly aware of the urgency, in the interests of France, of bringing the dangerous questions in discussion to an end, and had I not been equally assured that they could not help seeing that, however firm and determined was the attitude of Her Majesty's Government, the claims and demands of Great Britain were in no way in excess of that which strict justice would award her.

Your Lordship will find enclosed the Protocol, with its Annexes, Maps and Form of Lease, signed by the four Commissioners, the Convention embodying these signed by myself and M. Hanotaux, and copies of the four Notes exchanged between his Excellency and myself on the occasion of the signature of the Convention, which took place very late last night at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.⁽²⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽²⁾ Not reproduced.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The text of the Convention of 14 June, 1898, signed at Paris is in *B.F.S.P.*, XCI, pp. 38–54. Ratification was postponed by a Protocol of 8th December, 1898, but eventually exchanged 13 June, 1899. An exchange of notes of 14 June, 1898, is printed in *B.F.S.P.*, XCI, pp. 109–11. A Declaration completing the foregoing Convention, signed at London, 21 March, 1899 [ratifications exchanged 13 June, 1899], is printed in *B.F.S.P.*, XCI, 55–7.]

PART II.—THE FASHODA CRISIS.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The official French version of the Fashoda dispute is contained in the *Livre Jaune* (1898), issued by M. Delcassé; v also Hanotaux: *Fachoda* (Paris 1909).]

No. 183.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3395.

(No. 325.)

My Lord.

Paris, D. July 1, 1898.

R. July 2, 1898.

. . . . I have not troubled your Lordship with detailed descriptions of the antecedents of the Members of the new Cabinet.⁽¹⁾ For the moment the only important personage among them as far as the Foreign Representatives are concerned is M. Delcassé, and I cannot say that his antecedents at the Ministry of the Colonies inspire me with any other expectation than that Her Majesty's Government will find him a very combative Minister. M. Denis Guibert, the Anglophobe writer in the "*Figaro*," welcomes this morning his advent at the Quai d'Orsay in the confident hope that he will signalise it by vigour in dealing with the Egyptian Question. It is at any rate generally believed that his selection for the portfolio of Foreign Affairs is very acceptable at St. Petersburg.

Of M. Brisson himself my personal opinion is decidedly favourable. I do not know why in some of the London Dailies he is described as a weak man. That is not at all the impression which I have gathered from acquaintance with him; while with regard to his sentiments towards England I am certainly disposed to credit him with friendliness and with a decided appreciation of English character and English institutions. . . .⁽²⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽¹⁾ [M. Brisson had succeeded M. Méline.]

⁽²⁾ [The rest of the despatch relates to personal details.]

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3395.

(No. 330.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Paris, D. July 4, 1898.

R. July 6, 1898.

. . . . With regard to what Count Kapnist said about France,⁽¹⁾ it is interesting to note that the language of Russian diplomatists abroad about the French alliance is almost always pitched in one key. Prince Lobanow expressed himself to me as "nauseated" with the adulation heaped upon him in Paris; Prince Ouroussoff on his arrival here spoke of the Franco-Russian intimacy almost with indifference; Count Kapnist's criticism of the French attitude is disdainful. These sentiments have not been so carefully concealed but that they are more than suspected at Paris, and the resentment which they engender by no means infrequently betrays itself.

Despite the waning enthusiasm on both sides, the principle of the Franco-Russian Alliance is nevertheless too valuable to each of the contracting parties to be lightly abandoned by either of them. Count Kapnist naturally deprecated any idea that Russia would have assisted France had a rupture occurred between the latter and Great Britain over West African Questions. He had his answer ready. What interest could Russia have in committing herself respecting affairs in that region?

I would venture however to ask in return what interest would Russia have in allowing her new ally to be crushed, as she must have been in a single-handed war with England? What interest would Russia have in neglecting the opportunity afforded by such a war of carrying out all those schemes in which her policy is opposed to our own?

I do not wish to be discourteous to Russian diplomacy, but I cannot but think that recent experience fairly justifies any suspicion we may entertain as to Russian candour; and that it would be extremely dangerous were we to base our policy in any controversy with France upon the assumption that we should be allowed to deal with her as our sole enemy.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

(1) [Reported by the British Ambassador at Vienna. The earlier part of the despatch relates to personal details.]

The Marquess of Salisbury to Lord Cromer.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5050.

(No. 109.) Secret.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, August 2, 1898.

It is desirable that you should be placed in possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government in respect to the line of action to be followed in the event of Khartoum being occupied at an early date by the forces now operating in the Soudan under the command of Sir Herbert Kitchener.

In view of the substantial military and financial co-operation, which has recently been afforded by Her Majesty's Government to the Government of the Khedive, Her Majesty's Government have decided that at Khartoum the British and Egyptian flags should be hoisted side by side. This decision will have no reference to the manner in which the occupied countries are to be administered in the future. It is not necessary at present to define their political status with any great precision. These matters can be considered at a later period. You will, however, explain to the Khedive and to his

Ministers that the procedure I have indicated is intended to emphasise the fact that Her Majesty's Government consider that they have a predominant voice in all matters connected with the Soudan, and that they expect that any advice which they may think fit to tender to the Egyptian Government, in respect to Soudan affairs, will be followed.

Her Majesty's Government do not contemplate that after the occupation of Khartoum any further military operations on a large scale, or involving any considerable expense, will be undertaken for the occupation of the provinces to the south; but the Sirdar is authorised to send two flotillas, one up the White and the other up the Blue Nile.

You are authorised to settle the composition of these two forces in consultation with the Sirdar.

Sir Herbert Kitchener should in person command the White Nile Flotilla as far as Fashoda, and may take with him a small body of British troops, should you concur with him in thinking such a course desirable.

The officer in command of the Blue Nile Flotilla is authorised to go as far as the foot of the cataract, which is believed to commence about Roseires. He is not to land troops with a view to marching beyond the point on the river navigable for steamers. Should he, before reaching Roseires, encounter any Abyssinian outposts, he is to halt, report the circumstances, and wait for further instructions.

There are two points to which Sir Herbert Kitchener's attention should be specially directed.

The first of these is that in dealing with any French or Abyssinian authorities who may be encountered, nothing should be said or done which would in any way imply a recognition on behalf of Her Majesty's Government of a title to possession on behalf of France or Abyssinia to any portion of the Nile Valley.

As regards France, the following extract from a note addressed by Sir Edmund Monson to M. Hanotaux on the 10th December, 1897, sets forth the view held by Her Majesty's Government on this subject—

“Her Majesty's Government,” Sir Edmund Monson said, “must not be understood to admit that any other European Power than Great Britain has any claim to occupy any part of the Valley of the Nile. The views of the British Government upon this matter were plainly stated in Parliament by Sir Edward Grey some years ago,⁽¹⁾ during the administration of the Earl of Rosebery, and were formally communicated to the French Government at the time. Her Majesty's present Government entirely adhere to the language that was on this occasion employed by their predecessors.”

The second point, which you should press strongly on the attention of Sir Herbert Kitchener, is the necessity of avoiding, by all possible means, any collision with the forces of the Emperor Menelek.

It is possible that a French force may be found in occupation of some portion of the Nile Valley. Should this contingency arise, the course of action to be pursued must depend so much on local circumstances that it is neither necessary nor desirable to furnish Sir Herbert Kitchener with detailed instructions. Her Majesty's Government entertain full confidence in Sir Herbert Kitchener's judgment and discretion. They feel assured that he will endeavour to convince the Commander of any French force with which he may come in contact that the presence of the latter in the Nile Valley is an infringement of the rights both of Great Britain and of the Khedive.

Sir Herbert Kitchener is authorised, should he think such a course desirable and practicable, to send a small force up the White Nile beyond its junction with the Sobat. The Officer Commanding this force should endeavour to open up communication with

⁽¹⁾ The 28th March, 1895. The note of the 10th December, 1897, is printed in *PP. Accounts and Papers*, (C 9054), CXII (1899), p. 867.]

the troops of the Congo State, who, it is known, are in occupation of some portion of the Nile Valley above Lado. I enclose three copies of the Agreement, signed on the 12th May, 1894, between Her Majesty's Government and the King of the Belgians. The officer in command of the Upper Nile Expedition, who should be furnished with a copy of this Agreement, must be careful to explain to any Belgian authorities with whom he may come in contact that, under Article II of this Convention, Her Majesty's Government do not recognise that the King of the Belgians has any right of permanent possession to any part of the Nile Valley, but, on the other hand, that there is no intention of interfering with the arrangement under which certain territories are temporarily leased to the Congo State.

It is scarcely necessary for me to add that, in the execution of the difficult and important work which now lies before him, Sir Herbert Kitchener may rely on the full and cordial support of Her Majesty's Government.⁽²⁾

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

(²) [Partly printed in *Accounts and Papers*, (C 9054), CXII (1899), pp. 869-70.]

No. 186.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France (Africa) 3145.

(No. 264.) Africa. Most Confidential.

Paris, D. August 4, 1898.

My Lord,

R. August 6, 1898.

I have recently thought it my duty to forward to your Lordship articles and extracts from the Parisian press denouncing the West African Convention between Great Britain and France in very unequivocal terms, and insisting upon the necessity of the introduction of such modifications in its fiscal stipulations as would entirely change its character.

It was, of course, to be expected that the journalistic organ of the Colonial group would take this line very strongly. M. Delcassé has himself admitted to me that from this quarter the strongest opposition to the ratification of the Convention as it stands must be anticipated. Nothing, however, could be more positive than his language as to the duty of the Government to defend it, and this I have already reported to your Lordship.

If M. Brisson and his colleagues are determined upon this point, I believe that the ratification of the Convention ought not to be in any serious danger. The Colonial group is very noisy, and has very able exponents in the press, such, for instance, as M. Étienne, who has published an article in "*Les Questions Diplomatiques et Coloniales*" going fully into the whole question, and strongly condemning M. Hanotaux, but I do not believe that the country at large either cares much about such matters or knows anything about them.

I should, therefore, not be very much disturbed as to the fate of the Convention were it not that the question of its ratification will in all probability come up very shortly after those events on the Upper Nile which we confidently count upon as destined to shed fresh lustre upon Anglo-Egyptian prowess, and at the same time to bring once more to the front that Egyptian question which France has recently allowed to slumber.

Whether that question will be taken up seriously by M. Brisson's Government I have as yet no means of judging, but the effect of the fall of Khartoum and of the predominance of British prestige in the Eastern Soudan will certainly be most irritating on the public opinion of France. I do not mean to say that Frenchmen in

general care very much about Egypt, or resent very much the position which Great Britain holds there. But it remains a sentimental grievance, and, as we have seen, no French Government has hitherto dared to profess indifference to it. My belief is that hardly any sensible or well-informed person in France expects that we shall ever leave Egypt; but there will be more or less of an outcry when the moment comes, as it seems to me it must shortly come, when we shall be called upon by the force of circumstances to make a categorical statement of our intention of an indefinite prolongation of our occupation, even if it be not something stronger than that.

With this prospect before us, and the increasing tension which may be caused by the whole Madagascar question, and by the French threat of giving us trouble over Zanzibar in return, I confess that I do not view without some apprehension the possibility that the ratification of the West African Convention by the Legislature may not be so easily procured as I believe M. Hanotaux at the last expected would be the case.

But I repeat that the determination of M. Brisson's Government to stand by it, if frankly avowed and intelligently supported, ought to carry the ratification through in safety.

So far as I can see, the present Government is elementarily strong, but I need not remind your Lordship how easy it is to get up a popular cry in this country, which no Government, however strong in its individual composition, could successfully resist.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 187.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3396.

(No. 443.)

My Lord,

Paris, D. September 8, 1898.

R. September 10, 1898.

I have reported to your Lordship by telegraph the short conversation which I had with M. Delcassé yesterday respecting the rumoured "alliance" between Great Britain and Germany.

Having found no information in connection with, or confirmation of, the rumour in the correspondence which I received by messenger from the Foreign Office yesterday morning, I was in a position to assure M. Delcassé that he could not know less than I did upon the subject and probably knew more.

All I could say was that if there were any truth in the assertions of the newspapers it would probably be found that whatever agreement had been made referred exclusively to Colonial Questions between the two countries, such as the delimitation of the frontier of their respective possessions on the West Coast of Africa and other matters at issue in that Continent.

M. Delcassé observed that of course the conclusion of any foreign Alliance would be contrary to the traditional policy of Great Britain, to which I assented with the reservation that the rule is subject to exception in case of war.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.⁽¹⁾

F.O. France 3396.

(No. 441.) Confidential.

Paris, D. September 8, 1898.

My Lord,

R. September 10, 1898.

M. Delcassé, whom I had not seen for ten days, received the Diplomatic Body as usual yesterday.

His Excellency, without loss of time, congratulated me upon the Khartoum victory. He said that the differences of opinion which existed between the two countries about Egypt could not affect the judgment passed by France upon this brilliant feat of arms.

I thanked him, and he then went on to say that he presumed that the British flotilla would now push up the river as quickly as possible, and that he consequently wished to observe that the French expedition under Captain Marchand, undertaken in virtue of an understanding with the Congolese Government, might before long be met with by it, and that it was proper that Her Majesty's Government should know that the clearest instructions had been given to that gentleman as to his position and attitude. He had been distinctly told that he is nothing but an "emissary of civilisation," and that he has no authority to assume the decision of questions of right which appertain exclusively to the competence of the British and French Governments. He had been warned to take no steps whatever which may give rise to local conflicts, and his Excellency therefore begged me to communicate to your Lordship the foregoing information, together with the expression of his hope that Her Majesty's Government would, in transmitting it to the officers in command of the advancing expedition, give such instructions as would prevent a collision by reserving all questions of principle for direct discussion at home.

M. Delcassé referred to our last conversation, in which he had expressed his conviction that all outstanding differences between the two countries might be amicably arranged by the exercise of patience and conciliation. He repeated that the Government of the Republic held this view most strongly, and that they are consequently anxious to avoid local disputes.

I said that I would at once inform your Lordship of what he had said, but that as he had spoken of a possibility of a meeting between our gun-boats and Captain Marchand's expedition, I should like to know where that expedition is, and whether he had any recent news from Captain Marchand himself.

M. Delcassé replied that he had within the last forty-eight hours had news "of" (he did not say "from") Captain Marchand, but that it could not be said to be recent, as it had taken a long time to reach France. As for the position of the expedition at this moment, he could not tell me where it is, as he himself does not know.

The news which he had received had been satisfactory as regards the health and condition of its members, but the progress had been slow: and now the French Government had cause for anxiety as to the fate which might be reserved for it at the hands of the scattered and flying remnants of the Dervish army, whose attempt to find refuge in the south might create disturbance in other regions, to which the members of the French expedition might fall victims.

I put several tentative questions to M. Delcassé with the hope of eliciting something more definite, but without avail. Nevertheless, although he spoke with apparent frankness, I can hardly believe that he has not some more positive information than he was willing to disclose. He said, however, with a smile, that as the British forces were so admirably served by all the appliances of civilisation, he had no doubt that a telegraph line would soon be carried above the junction of the two Niles, and that he should have direct and speedy information of Captain Marchand's whereabouts.

⁽¹⁾ [Expanded from *id.* to *id.*, Tel. No. 127 of the 7th September, D. 5 P.M., R. same day.]

M. Delcassé's language and manner were throughout very cordial. . . . But in this M. Delcassé only reflects, I imagine, the deliberate judgment of the majority of his countrymen who had begun to recognise that there is nothing to be gained by blustering about Egypt, and that it will be more dignified for them to accept the inevitable. I do not mean to say that they are prepared to acquiesce without renewed remonstrance in the continuance of the British occupation, or that a great deal of abuse will not be showered upon us by the Parisian press. But while they very naturally try to argue that "logically" that occupation should now come to an end, they see clearly enough that the recent operations have simply clinched our hold upon Egypt more tightly, and that British "practice" cannot be assimilated to French "logic."

The moderation of M. Delcassé's tone and manner inspires me with a certain amount of hope that, if the French are going to discuss this question at once, they will do so with calmness. No doubt the Government will be questioned upon the subject when the Chamber meets, and will be forced to maintain in public that French policy does not and cannot vary in regard to it. But as the whole country is aware that under existing circumstances that policy must remain unsupported by action, I trust that there is no danger that the Government will compromise itself by any talk of entering upon impracticable engagements.⁽²⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽²⁾ [Partly printed in *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9054), CXII, p. 871. The last four paragraphs are omitted and the preceding part is slightly paraphrased.]

No. 189.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3399.

Tel. P.

Schlucht, September 9, 1898.

I have received your Excellency's telegram No. 127 of the 7th instant, reporting a conversation with the French Minister for Foreign Affairs, in the course of which he alluded to the possibility of the British flotilla, in the course of its voyage up the Nile, meeting with the French expedition under Captain Marchand.

If M. Delcassé should revert to this subject, I request you to point out to him that, by the military events of last week, all the territories which were subject to the Khalifa passed to the British and Egyptian Governments by right of conquest. Her Majesty's Government do not consider that this right is open to discussion, but they would be prepared to deal in the manner suggested by his Excellency with any territorial controversies now existing in regard to those regions which are not affected by this assertion.

No. 190.

Sir E. Monson to Foreign Office.

F.O. France 3400.

Tel. (No. 131.)

Paris, September 10, 1898.

D. 5.45 P.M.

Following sent to Lord Salisbury to-day :—

“ Your telegram of yesterday.

M. Marchand's mission : “ In view of intention of Sirdar to proceed at once to Fashoda. I thought it as well to let Minister of Foreign Affairs know at once the tenor of your telegram.

“He confined himself to commenting upon the expression ‘territories which were subject to the Khalifa,’ which he thought vague.

“He volunteered that his last news of Marchand was dated in March and came via the Congo the other day.

“He repeated that he had no idea of his present whereabouts.

“In reply to my mention of the newspaper rumour of his being at Fashoda he declared that he knew nothing of it.”

No. 191.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5050.

Paris, D. September 18, 1898.

Tel. (No. 137.) P.⁽¹⁾

R. September 19, 8 A.M.

Fashoda.

After making the communication recorded in my immediately preceding telegram No. 136 of this day, M. Delcassé said that the appointment proposed would doubtless be accepted by Her Majesty's Government as a proof of the anxious desire of the French Government to maintain the most harmonious relations with Great Britain.⁽²⁾ The question the latter ask themselves is, “Is that desire reciprocated?” If there is the same feeling in London as there is in Paris, there can be no real danger of a conflict between the two Powers, even upon so delicate a question as that which seems to be imminent on the Upper Nile.

His Excellency said that he must repeat that he had no knowledge of the position of M. Marchand; but let it be assumed that he is at Fashoda, as the English newspapers assert, are the French Government to understand that Her Majesty's Government say that he has no right to be there?

I answered that while there was no doubt in my mind as to the wish of Her Majesty's Government to live in perfect amity with that of France, I had equally no hesitation in saying that they consider that Fashoda, as a dependency of the Khalifate, has now passed into the hands of Great Britain and Egypt.

As to the question of M. Marchand's right to be there, M. Delcassé was as well aware as I that Her Majesty's Government had very openly let France understand that any incursion of them into the Upper Nile Basin would be considered by us as an unfriendly act. Why, then, did they send this Mission, when they must know what serious results its success in reaching this point must inevitably produce?

M. Delcassé said that he must remind me that France had not **only never recognised** the British sphere of influence in the Upper Nile region, but that M. Hanotaux had in the Senate openly protested against it. But, as a matter of fact, there is no Marchand Mission. In 1892 and 1893 M. Liotard was sent to the Upper Ubanghi as Commissioner, with instructions to secure French interests in the North-East. M. Marchand had been appointed one of the subordinates, and received all his orders from M. Liotard. There could be no doubt that for a long time past the whole region of the Bahr-el-Ghazal had been out of the influence of the Khalifa. If the newspapers' stories were true, Fashoda itself had not been an occupied post of the Khalifate when taken possession of by the (supposed) Marchand expedition.

However, said his Excellency, it would be useless to discuss these details now. What he wished to impress upon me was that if Her Majesty's Government would meet that of France in a friendly spirit, there could be no reason why a satisfactory arrangement should not be quickly arrived at.

(1) [Paraphrase. Original not traced.]

(2) [The proposed appointment of M. Paul Cambon to the London Embassy.]

I said to his Excellency that I must tell him very frankly that the situation on the Upper Nile is a dangerous one. I must refer him again to your Lordship's telegram of the 9th instant.⁽¹⁾ and I must state distinctly that Fashoda falls within the territories therein designated as dependencies of the Khalifate, and that Her Majesty's Government are determined to hold to the decision already announced to him. It was right that I should state to him categorically that they would not consent to a compromise ("on ne consentira jamais à transiger") on this point.

For the rest we had no wish to pick a quarrel: but having long ago given a warning, I could not see how we could now cause surprise if we resent a step which we had cautioned France not to take.

These were the essential points of our conversation, which was conducted on both sides with perfect calmness.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [V. No. 189, p. 164.]

⁽²⁾ [This is partly printed in *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9054), CXII, p. 872. The despatch of the 22nd September is also published there in extract form.]

No. 192.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3396.

(No. 464.)

My Lord.

Paris, D. September 19, 1898.

R. September 20, 1898.

As I have already informed your Lordship by telegraph, M. Delcassé has proposed to the President the appointment of M. Cambon, now Ambassador of the Republic at Constantinople, to the London Embassy in succession to Baron de Courcel.

His Excellency sent a note to the Embassy the night before last to say that he had a communication to make to me; and as soon as I received it at St. Germain yesterday I telephoned to him that I would come to Paris in the afternoon, and I accordingly called upon him at 3 o'clock.

M. Delcassé at once communicated to me the reason for which he had desired an interview; and in announcing the President's choice of M. Cambon for the post about to be vacated in London, said that he hoped that the selection would be agreeable to the Queen; and that I would assure your Lordship that the Government of the Republic, actuated by the sincere desire that the relations between the two countries should be established and continue on the most harmonious footing, had taken into consideration the character and disposition of M. Cambon, who is well-known as being a warm friend to England and the English, as he believed Her Majesty's Government must already know from Sir Philip Currie.

His Excellency further stated that he is anxious that the official appointment should be made as soon as possible, and that he would indeed like to submit the Decree to that effect to the President's signature at the earliest moment.

I said that I would lose no time in communicating with your Lordship, and that the eminent position of M. Cambon in the Diplomatic Service and the qualities to which his Excellency had referred, would, as far as I could venture to foresee, approve themselves to Her Majesty, whose decision I had, of course, no right to anticipate. I was certain, however, that I might safely assure his Excellency that Her Majesty's Government would sincerely appreciate and respond to his own friendly expressions and those of the President of the Republic.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Mr. Rodd to the Marquess of Salisbury.⁽¹⁾

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 4960.

Cairo, *D. September 25, 1898.

Tel. (No. 244.) P.

R. September 25, 1898.

I have received the following telegram this morning from Sir Herbert Kitchener :—

“I have just returned here from Fashoda where I found Captain Marchand, accompanied by eight officers and 120 men, located in the old Government buildings, over which they had hoisted the French flag; I sent a letter announcing my approach the day before my arrival at Fashoda. A small row-boat carrying the French flag brought me a reply from Captain Marchand on the following morning, the 19th September, stating that he had reached Fashoda on the 10th July, his Government having given him instructions to occupy the Bahr-el-Ghazal as far as the confluence of the Bahr-el-Jebel, as well as the Shilluk country on the left bank of the White Nile as far as Fashoda. He stated that he had concluded a Treaty with the Chief of the Shilluk tribe, whereby the latter placed his country under the protection of France, and that he had sent this Treaty to his Government for ratification by way of Abyssinia, as well as by the Bahr-el-Ghazal. Captain Marchand described the fight which he had had with the Dervishes on the 25th August, and said that, in anticipation of a second and more severe attack, he had sent his steamer south for reinforcements, but our arrival had averted this danger.

“When we arrived at Fashoda, Captain Marchand and M. Germain came on board, and I at once stated that the presence of a French force at Fashoda and in the Valley of the Nile was regarded as a direct infringement of the rights of the Egyptian Government and of that of Great Britain, and I protested in the strongest terms against their occupation of Fashoda and their hoisting the French flag in the dominions of His Highness the Khedive. In reply, Captain Marchand stated that he had precise orders to occupy the country and to hoist the French flag over the Government buildings at Fashoda, and that it was impossible for him to retire without receiving orders from his Government to that effect, but he did not expect that these orders would be delayed. On my pressing him to say whether, seeing that I had a preponderating force, he was prepared to resist the hoisting of the Egyptian flag at Fashoda, he hesitated and replied that resistance was impossible. I then caused the flag to be hoisted on a ruined bastion of the old Egyptian fortifications about 500 yards south of the French flag, and on the only road which leads to the interior from the French position, which is surrounded by impassable marshes on all sides. Before leaving for the south, I handed to Captain Marchand a formal protest in writing, on behalf of the British and Egyptian Governments, against any occupation by France of any part of the Nile Valley, such occupation being an infringement of the rights of these Governments which I could not recognise.

“I appointed Major Jackson to be Commandant of the Fashoda district, where I left a garrison consisting of one Soudanese battalion, four guns, and a gun-boat, after which I proceeded to the Sobat, where, on the 20th September, a post was established and the flag hoisted. We neither saw nor heard anything of the Abyssinians on the Sobat River, but we were told that their nearest post was situated some 350 miles further up. The Bahr-el-Jebel is completely blocked by the ‘sudd,’ and in consequence I ordered a gun-boat to patrol up the Bahr-el-Ghazal towards Meshra-er-Rek. On my way north, as I passed Fashoda, I sent

⁽¹⁾ [*Cf.* Despatch of Sir H. Kitchener of the 21st September with some other papers enclosed in Rodd to Salisbury of the 29th September and printed in *Accounts and Papers*, (C 9055), CXII (1899), pp. 892-4.]

a letter to Captain Marchand, stating that all transport of war material on the Nile was absolutely prohibited, as the country was under military law. The Shilluk Chief, with a large following, has come into Major Jackson's camp; the whole tribe are delighted to return to their allegiance to us, and the Chief absolutely denies having made any Treaty with the French.

"The position in which Captain Marchand finds himself at Fashoda is as impossible as it is absurd. He is cut off from the interior, and his water transport is quite inadequate; he is, moreover, short of ammunition and supplies, which must take months to reach him; he has no following in the country, and nothing could have saved him and his expedition from being annihilated by the Dervishes had we been a fortnight later in crushing the Khalifa.

"The futility of all their efforts is fully realised by Captain Marchand himself, and he seems quite as anxious to return as we are to facilitate his departure. In his present position he is powerless, but I hope that Her Majesty's Government will take the necessary steps for his removal as soon as possible, as the presence of a French force and flag on the Nile is manifestly extremely undesirable.

"Captain Marchand only lost four natives on the journey, and his expedition is all well.

"I am sending a complete despatch by Lord Edward Cecil, who is leaving with it for Cairo at once."

No. 194.

Mr. Rodd to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Cairo, September 25, 1898.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

D. 1:30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 245.)

R. 2:30 P.M.

Further from Sirdar :—

"If the French Government will at once give telegraphic instructions for the explorer M. Marchand and his expedition to leave Fashoda and come down Nile, I can now send special steamer with such orders to fetch them.

"I am quite sure that no one would be more pleased than M. Marchand and his officers to secure release from their unpleasant position."

He suggests taking over their boats and launch at a valuation.

[*ED. NOTE.*—Marchand's account of the incident was given in the *Figaro* for the 26th August, 1904. Sir E. Monson forwarded a copy of it to Lord Lansdowne on the same day, together with the following despatch (No. 492 of the 26th August, 1904, F.O. France 3667):—

"My Lord,

Your Lordship is aware that Colonel Marchand has been recently removed from the active list of the Army, nominally by his own resignation, but practically as a censure on the almost insubordinate conduct which gave the Minister of War no option but to accept the resignation; after the infliction of a month's arrest upon the obstinate officer.

Colonel Marchand, being in this way freed from any regular obligation of discretion, has availed himself of his independence to communicate to the *Figaro* the enclosed account of the arrival of Lord Kitchener at Fashoda, and of the interview which His Lordship held with Colonel Marchand on that occasion.

I enclose this account not as being a valuable contribution for the use of the historian, but rather as a proof of the bad taste and the mendacity of Colonel Marchand, and as evidence of the correctness of the judgment of the Military Authorities in Paris in profiting by the opportunity of putting an end to his career. He always struck me as being, if not absolutely stupid, a much overrated man. In this report he shows himself to be ignorant, malevolent, and wilfully untruthful.

He attempts to make fun out of Lord Kitchener's French conversation, being probably unaware of His Lordship's having been partly educated in France, and his having absolutely joined the French forces for a short time in the Franco-German War.

He asserts that with the insignificant number of men under his command he could easily have prevented Lord Kitchener's landing: adding that with the slightest encouragement from him the majority of His Lordship's troops would have gone over to the French!

I am surprised that a paper like the *Figaro* can have been tempted to publish such a transparently malicious article; but I hope that its appearance will, in the minds of all sensible Frenchmen, confirm the discredit which Colonel Marchand has brought upon himself.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON."]

No. 195.⁽¹⁾

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. 146/3571.

Tel. (No. 200.)

Foreign Office, September 25, 1898.

You should read to the French Minister for Foreign Affairs Mr. Rodd's telegrams Nos. 244 and 245 just repeated to you. You had better not leave a copy.

You should at the same time say that H[er] M[ajesty's] Government entirely approve the Sirdar's proceedings and language.⁽²⁾

⁽¹⁾ [Original not in F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051, but a note by Lord Salisbury gives its substance.]

⁽²⁾ [This and the preceding two telegrams are paraphrased in *Accounts and Papers, 1899* (C 9054), CXII. pp. 875-6.]

No. 196.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, September 27, 1898.

F.O. France 3400 and F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

D. 7.15 P.M.

Tel. (No. 151.)

R. September 28.

Fashoda. Minister for Foreign Affairs sent for me this evening.

He said that he had communicated to the Cabinet Council held to-day by the President the *aide-mémoire*, and also as much as he remembered of the telegrams verbally made known to him.

In those telegrams it is stated that M. Marchand had addressed a Report in duplicate to his Government, sending one copy by Abyssinia and the other by the French Congo. Clearly these Reports could not reach Paris for some time to come; but the Government of the Republic would be embarrassed to act without being made acquainted with the situation by their own Agent.

He wished me, therefore, to convey to your Lordship the request of the Government of the Republic that a telegram might be sent (*en clair*, if wished) by the French Agent at Cairo to Khartoum, to be thence forwarded up the Nile to Fashoda, instructing M. Marchand to send at once a copy of his Report to Cairo by one of the French officers of his Mission, so that the Government might be made acquainted with its contents as soon as possible. All the expense would of course be borne by the French Government.

His Excellency laid stress upon the great desire here to avoid serious difficulty, and said that he hoped his sincerity and that of his colleagues in this respect would not be doubted: but he also, and especially after the conduct of the Sirdar, acting undoubtedly under instruction, felt convinced that Her Majesty's Government had no less desire than that of the Republic to avoid a conflict. He might, therefore, appeal to me on humanitarian grounds to submit his request to your Lordship.

I said that I must conclude from M. Delcassé's language that the Government had decided not to recall M. Marchand until they had received his Report. Was this so? I pointed out that M. Marchand's position appears to be a disagreeable one, and that he himself stated to be desirous of retiring from it. Such being the case, I must press this question urgently. Did he refuse to recall M. Marchand at once?

His Excellency after some few minutes' consideration said that he was ready, and he believed that his colleagues would be ready, to make great concessions, but that if I asked him for the impossible, there would be but one answer. He would be ready to enter into discussion, negotiation, or whatever it might be called without receiving the Report, but this was all he could do.

I reminded him that he knew from your Lordship's telegram of the 9th instant that Her Majesty's Government considered that there could be no discussion upon such questions as the right of Egypt to Fashoda.

His Excellency replied that if there was to be no discussion, a rupture could not be avoided. The expression in your Lordship's telegram was so vague that the French Government must have some clear and explicit definition of what Her Majesty's Government consider to be the territories to which, on the part of Egypt, they lay claim for her. He did not see that the Belgians had any more business at Lado according to our view than the French had at Fashoda. Why did we not turn the Belgians out, or how could we justify our advance upon, and occupation of, territory which was formerly a dependency of Egypt, without stating that we held it for the latter.

However, said his Excellency, he did not want to argue these matters at this moment. All that he wanted was that I should state his request to your Lordship, and that I should not drive him into a corner by refusing on the part of Her Majesty's Government to entertain it. Already the Paris press was circulating the rumour that Marchand is abandoned by his Government, and his Excellency showed me some of the papers in which he is held up to execration as the "author of national disgrace."

I said at last that without engaging myself or my Government in the slightest degree, I would consent to state his wishes to your Lordship, but that I yielded only to his pressing appeal not to drive him to extremities. Further than to do this I could promise nothing whatever.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [Paraphrased and last three paragraphs omitted in *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9054), CXII. p. 877.]

No. 197.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3399.

Foreign Office, September 28, 1898.

Tel. (No. 206.)

D. 3 P.M.

Your telegram No. 151.

We cannot refuse to convey a message from the French Agent at Cairo to a French explorer who finds himself in a difficult position on the Upper Nile, and you may inform Minister for Foreign Affairs that we will ask Mr. Rodd to forward any such message at once to Omdurman and to request the Sirdar to send it on thence to Fashoda as he may have opportunity to do so. We have no wish to be acquainted with

the contents of the message. But it must be understood that we can accept no responsibility for any consequences to M. Marchand's health or safety which may result from delay in his departure from his present position.

You should also point out that if the present situation is prolonged, great uneasiness will be caused here, and some immediate publication of facts by the Government will become necessary. You should ask how much of the Minister's recent communications to you on the subject we may consider ourselves at liberty to publish. If we can announce that M. Marchand is leaving Fashoda further publication for the time would be unnecessary.⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [Paraphrased and a good deal omitted in *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9054), CXII, pp. 877-8.]

No. 198.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, September 28, 1898.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

D. 6.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 154.) Secret.

R. 8.30 P.M.

Fashoda. Minister for Foreign Affairs initiated to-day a conversation on this burning question by stating that French Minister in London was instructed to speak to your Lordship about it. Much of what passed between us was but a repetition of previous conversations, but his Excellency was just as determined as ever upon the right of France to occupy territory practically abandoned by Egypt, and contested the right of Great Britain to warn off other Powers which had not recognised her sphere of influence or to assert that France was committing an unfriendly act in advancing on Upper Nile. He at the same time declared his conviction that honest discussion between the two Governments would soon result in an understanding. He reiterated that it is the desire of the present French Government to make a friend of England, adding that between ourselves he would much prefer an Anglo-French to an Franco-Russian Alliance.⁽¹⁾ He again entreated me to take account of existing excitement in France, which is becoming dangerous and might in an instant break out into overt acts, repeating what he had said yesterday: "Do not ask me for the impossible; do not drive me into a corner." He admitted that he knew feeling in England is strong, but he argued that Englishmen are not so excitable as the French, and felt sentimental considerations less deeply. I replied that he could not exaggerate strength of feeling in England on this subject, both on the part of Government and the public, and the knowledge of this caused me great apprehension. He said: "You surely would not break with us over Fashoda?" To which I answered that it was exactly that which I feared. Another observation was: "In such event we shall not stand alone; but I repeat I would rather have England for our ally than that other." Personally, I can see very little hope of their sending M. Marchand an order to leave Fashoda, but at the same time I must state that Minister of Foreign Affairs has several times referred to possibility of "transaction."

⁽¹⁾ [In original decypher this read "Anglo-Russian Alliance," but the copy initialled by Lord Salisbury is altered to read "Franco-Russian" as here.]

No. 199.

*Mr. Rodd to the Marquess of Salisbury.**Cairo, September 29, 1898.*

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

D. 5.25 P.M.

Tel. (No. 252.)

R. 5.45 P.M.

Fashoda.

From conversation with Lord Edward Cecil⁽¹⁾ I gather French officers admitted that all hopes of assistance and reinforcements for the south-west were very illusory.

Bahr-el-Gazel is open up to Meshra-el-Rek, but south of that is a country of impassable swamp through which communications could not be opened. Both in respect to their isolation and to Dervishes they have been practically rescued from annihilation by our timely arrival.

(1) A.D.C. to Sir H. Kitchener.

No. 200.

*Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.**Paris, September 30, 1898.*

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

D. 6 P.M.

Tel. (No. 160.) Secret.

R. 8.30 P.M.

Minister for Foreign Affairs says he wishes me to let you know unofficially that it is impossible for the French Government to give up Fashoda, their right to occupy which Her Majesty's Government do not even choose to discuss. Neither this nor any other Ministry could submit to what would be the humiliation of France. Any formal demand of this nature would be considered as an ultimatum and rejected.

Already by the occupation of Sobat, the Sirdar has committed what is practically an act of war or at any rate a more than unfriendly act, of which, however, his Excellency does not yet wish to make official complaint. All his conversations of to-day he requested me to consider as unofficial, but as embodying a decision which would not be retracted.

All France would resent such an insult to the national honour as is involved in the proposal to recall M. Marchand and to treat the French occupation of Fashoda as an unjustifiable act. He could not think that it is wished in England to go to war over such a question, but France would, however unwilling, accept war rather than submit.

I confined myself to saying that Her Majesty's Government had already through me signified their point of view, and that for my part I did not see how they could possibly retreat from it.

All this was unofficial.

No. 201.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Mr. Rodd.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 4959.

Tel. (No. 92.) P.

Foreign Office, October 1, 1898.

The following is secret :—

I request that you will inform the Sirdar that it has become clear that the French Government will not instruct M. Marchand to leave Fashoda. They expect that Her Majesty's Government will purchase his departure by large concessions of territory. This Her Majesty's Government will not do.

Under these circumstances, the question remains how M. Marchand is to be dealt with if he persists in remaining at Fashoda.

The Sirdar has already stated that he will not allow any reinforcements or munitions of war to pass upon the Nile. Nothing further remains to be done in this respect. The Sirdar has, no doubt, taken care that there is a sufficient force to secure that his declaration is carried into effect.

M. Marchand's position should be made as untenable as possible. If he is in want of food supplies, it will be very necessary to use circumspection in helping him to obtain them. Until he expresses his intention of going down the river, no such supplies should be furnished to him except in case of extreme necessity.

No. 202.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.⁽¹⁾

F.O. France 3399.

Tel. (No. 213.) P.

Foreign Office, October 3, 1898.

I request your Excellency to inform the French Minister for Foreign Affairs that, in accordance with his wish, his message for M. Marchand has been transmitted to Khartoum and will be forwarded thence to its destination. In order to avoid any misunderstanding, you should state to M. Delcassé that the fact of Her Majesty's Government having complied with his Excellency's request in regard to the transmission of the message does not imply the slightest modification of the views previously expressed by them. You should add that, whether in times of Egyptian or of Dervish dominion, the region in which M. Marchand was found has never been without an owner, and that in the view of Her Majesty's Government his expedition into it with an escort of 100 Senegalese troops has no political effect, nor can any political significance be attached to it.

⁽¹⁾ [Printed in *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9054), CXII, p. 878.]

No. 203.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.⁽¹⁾

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

(No. 355 A.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 6, 1898.

The French Ambassador called upon me yesterday at the Foreign Office. His interview was a long one, lasting nearly two hours. The greater part of it was occupied by observations on his part upon the question of Fashoda, which he introduced himself. His argument principally dwelt upon the fact that the country bordering the White Nile, though it was formerly under the Government of Egypt, had become *res nullius* by its abandonment on the part of the Egyptian Government; that the French had a right to a position on the Nile as much as the Germans or the Belgians; and that the French Government, by the reserves which they had uniformly made when the subject was mentioned, had retained for themselves the right to occupy the banks of the Nile when they thought fit.

In reply to his Excellency's observations I repeated the arguments on the British side of the case, which are already familiar. I pointed out to him that the Egyptian

⁽¹⁾ [Printed in *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9055), CXII, pp. 891-2.]

title to the banks of the Nile had certainly been rendered dormant by the military successes of the Mahdi; but that the amount of right, whatever it was, which by those events had been alienated from Egypt, had been entirely transferred to the conqueror. How much title remained to Egypt, and how much was transferred to the Mahdi and the Khalifa, was, of course, a question which could practically be only settled, as it was settled, on the field of battle. But their controversy did not authorise a third party to claim the disputed land as derelict. There is no ground in international law for asserting that the dispute of title between them, which had been inclined one day by military superiority in one direction, and a few years later had been inclined in the other, could give any authority or title to another Power to come in and seize the disputed region as vacant or relinquished territory. To the last the power of the Dervishes was extended as far south as Bor, and their effective occupation did not cease till their title passed by the victory of Omdurman without diminution into the hands of the conquering armies. I pointed out to him that such an occupation as that of M. Marchand, with an escort of 100 troops, could give no title to the occupying force, and that, in point of fact, but for the arrival of the British flotilla, M. Marchand's escort would have been destroyed by the Dervishes. M. Marchand's was a secret expedition into a territory already owned and occupied, and concerning which France had received repeated warnings that a seizure of land in that locality could not be accepted by Great Britain. The first warning was the Anglo-German Agreement, which was communicated to the French Government, and the provisions of which, as regards the Nile, were never formally contested. The next warning was given by the Agreement with the King of the Belgians, which gave him for his lifetime occupation up to Fashoda, and which Agreement is in existence and full force still. It has never been cancelled and never been repudiated by this country. It is true that the King of the Belgians was persuaded, without any assent on the part of Great Britain, to promise the French Government that he would not take advantage of it beyond a certain limit; but that concession on his part did not diminish the significance of the act as an assertion of her rights by England. In the objections raised by the French Government to that arrangement, the rights of the Khedive over these territories were expressly asserted as still existing. Then came Sir Edward Grey's speech in 1895, which was followed in 1897 by a formal note from Sir Edward Monson, informing the French Foreign Minister that Her Majesty's Government adhered to the statements made by their predecessors by that speech. If France had throughout intended to challenge our claims, and to occupy a portion of this territory for herself, she was bound to have broken silence. At all events, if she thought fit to try, in face of these warnings, to establish a title over the vast territory to which they applied by a secret expedition of a handful of men, she must not be surprised that the claim would not be recognised by us.

His Excellency dwelt at great length on the importance of an agreement between the two nations on this matter, and pressed that such an agreement should be arrived at without delay. He insisted on the strength of the feeling that prevailed in France on the subject. I assured him the strength of feeling that prevailed in England was not less remarkable. He made no definite proposition; but he vaguely indicated a wish that both sides should give out that negotiations were going on upon the question of delimitation between the territories claimed by the two Powers: and he thought it possible that if we did so, M. Marchand would return by the way that he came. He did not, however, make any such proposal, and he indicated pretty clearly that the delimitation must be one which would give a considerable stretch of the left bank of the Nile to France. I gave no countenance to this suggestion. He dwelt more than once upon the injustice of France being excluded from the Nile, while Germany and Belgium were admitted. I pointed out to him that the possession of a portion of the shores of Lake Victoria Nyanza could hardly be called a position on the banks of the Nile: and that whatever rights the Congo State possessed below Lado, where the navigable Nile commenced, were only given to the King of the Belgians during his life.

We separated without coming to any conclusion; for I had no communication to make, except the reiteration of our claim of right; and he made no suggestion of any arrangement by which that right could be reconciled with the present pretensions or desires of France.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

No. 204.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

(No. 500.)

Paris, D. October 7, 1898.

My Lord,

R. October 8, 1898.

Although the controversy on the Fashoda incident does not perhaps receive as much attention on the part of the French press as is given to it by London journalism, the articles which do appear in the serious Paris papers are couched in quite as firm and uncompromising language as any published by those English dailies which profess opinions of the type to which, in the current vernacular, the epithet "jingo" has been consecrated.

It would be a grievous waste of your Lordship's time were I to trouble you with specimens of what the irresponsible press on this side of the water is continually printing on this subject. But when the "Matin," which on foreign questions has now become the mouthpiece of the Government, puts forth in the greatest prominence an article such as that which I forwarded to your Lordship in my despatch No. 499 of the day before yesterday, it is my duty to lay stress upon the fact that the views of the Cabinet upon this subject have now been made known to the public in an unmistakably inspired and official form. The article in question has stated that "it was the French Government that organised the Marchand Mission, laid down its itinerary, and determined its goal. It was the Government that, no later than September, sent out reliefs to reinforce the small band which had attacked the Dervishes in the rear, and which, three months before the arrival of the Sirdar's army, had planted the flag of civilisation six hundred kilom. above Khartoum. The Government knew perfectly well what it was doing, and what it intended. It will not retreat before menaces from the press or any other menaces. . . . If the Foreign Office were to adopt and make its own the theories of the London press, and meet the offer of imminent negotiations by the previous question of the recall of M. Marchand, we are in a position to affirm that the reply of our Government would be the only one worthy of France—No."⁽¹⁾

. . . . In conversation with those for whose knowledge on the subject I cannot but entertain respect, I have found that, whether Frenchmen or foreigners, they recognise the certainty that it needs but the whisper of a possible insult to the French flag to arouse a tempest of excitement throughout the country. Up to the present moment it is believed that no formal demand has been made by Her Majesty's Government upon that of the Republic which would justify such an outburst; but it is well within the competence of the Ministry to raise it with a few words. And when it is remembered that in a fortnight hence the Chambers will meet, and that the Ministers will be called upon to state their views and their determination, it cannot be denied that we are within measurable distance of very dangerous excitement.

I trust that it is not necessary for me to assure your Lordship that in making these observations I am in no way influenced by any doubt of the policy which the safeguarding of British and Egyptian rights imposes upon us, and from which considerations of national honour and national self-respect alike forbid us to depart.

⁽¹⁾ [Details about French public opinion.]

In spite of the critical nature of other questions of international importance now occupying the attention of the civilised world, it is no exaggeration to say that all those questions are dwarfed into insignificance by the possibility of a rupture between the two great Maritime Powers of Western Europe. So exclusively, indeed, must that attention be concentrated upon the relations between Great Britain and France, that I shall not be surprised, should the present situation continue, to see that one at least of the Great Powers, to whom peace is of importance, assumes the right to submit to Europe that, as an off-shoot of the general Eastern question, this grave controversy should be made the subject of deliberation by other Powers besides the two most immediately concerned.

Words have, indeed, dropped from M. Delcassé in more than one of our many conversations which show that this contingency has suggested itself to his mind, and without venturing to anticipate the answer which Her Majesty's Government would return to any such suggestion, I have little doubt but that M. Delcassé himself conceives that it would be difficult for England to oppose a negative to the combined expostulations of all the Powers with which she has so long acted in concert in South-Eastern Europe, in Armenia, and in the Levant. . . .⁽²⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽²⁾ [Attitude of foreign powers.]

No. 205.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Lord Cromer.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

Foreign Office, October 7, 1898.

Tel. (No. 106.)

D. 7.30 P.M.

Your telegram No. 260.

The Sirdar having formally announced at Fashoda that he had placed the country under military law and prohibited all transport of war material on the Nile and that announcement having been approved by Her Majesty's Government, he has of course authority to take whatever measures he thinks necessary to enforce this decision. The French Government are aware that we have approved his announcement.

I should desire to avoid making any further communication to the French Government on the subject. They have been informed of the Sirdar's action and will understand what it implies.

I presume that if Marchand elected to retire by the way he came no opposition would be offered to his doing so.

No. 206.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

(No. 504.)

Paris, D. October 9, 1898.

My Lord,

R. October 10, 1898.

I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship copy of a telegram dated London, 8th October, which appeared in the "Matin" of this morning, on the subject of Fashoda.⁽¹⁾

The writer lays down, as an indisputable fact, that the English press has modified its tone, and that discussion is now possible.

⁽¹⁾ Not reproduced.

He points out that the policy followed all along by France has been actuated solely by the necessity of obtaining a commercial outlet for Central Africa, and in no way by a desire to thwart English policy in the Valley of the Nile. The speech of Sir E. Grey of the 29th March, 1895, to which so much importance is attached by the English press, is, after all, merely an incident in the far larger question of the future of the Upper Nile, and the telegram concludes by a statement to the effect that, from whatever point of view this question be regarded, it is clear that a formal and definite settlement is indispensable, and that it can only be arrived at by means of courteous, calm, and friendly discussion.

It is more than possible that this telegram, though nominally from London, may have been inserted in the "Matin" by the Government here, with a view to paving the way to a settlement of the question by negotiation.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 207.

Lord Cromer to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

(No. 160.)

Cairo, D. October 9, 1898.

My Lord,

R. October 17, 1898.

I have the honour to enclose a letter I have received from the Sirdar describing the concessions in respect to territory west of the Nile, which he considers might, from a military point of view, be unobjectionably made to the French Government.

Your Lordship will observe that Sir Herbert Kitchener's proposals are based upon the Agreement signed with the German Government on the 15th November, 1893.

I am, &c.

CROMER.

Enclosure 1 in No. 207.

General Sir H. Kitchener to Lord Cromer.

My dear Lord Cromer,

Cairo, October 8, 1898.

I enclose a description of a frontier line, granting large concessions to France, that might from a military point of view, in my opinion, be given them without injuring our position in this part of Africa.

I think it is most important that they should not be allowed to occupy territory east of this line in the Nile basin.

Yours, &c.

HERBERT KITCHENER.

Enclosure 2 in No. 207.

Memorandum.

The proposed boundary to start from a point on the northern frontier of the Congo Free State, near the source of the River Sueh, in the Niam Niam country, about latitude 4° 30', and trending in a north-westerly direction, to follow the line of the watershed dividing the Nile basin from the basin in the Sharé River till it strikes the 10th parallel of latitude, after which it should follow this parallel in a due westerly

direction till it reaches Miltu—the extreme eastern limit of the German Kamerun Protectorate.

NOTE.—By this arrangement France would secure the Upper Ubangi, the Soudé country, and a portion of Dar Fertit. It should be observed that the greater part of these countries were subject to Egyptian rule prior to the Mahdi revolt.

No. 208.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

(No. 505.)

Paris, D. October 10, 1898.

My Lord,

R. October 11, 1898.

With reference to my telegram No. 165 of to-day's date, I have the honour to transmit to your Lordship herewith copy of a leading article published in the "Matin" on the subject of Fashoda,⁽¹⁾ which, in view of the tone previously adopted by that organ with regard to the question, almost verges on the ludicrous, so sudden and complete is the change of front taken up.

"The abandonment of Fashoda is perfectly compatible with the preservation of the national honour"; such is the pith of the article.

Whilst doing full justice, says the writer, to the energy, perseverance and indomitable tenacity of purpose which enabled Major Marchand to penetrate into the region of the Great Lakes before the arrival of the Sirdar's troops, and to hoist the French flag inside Fashoda whilst the English cocked snooks at him from without, yet we must realise that it is most imprudent to saddle ourselves with useless and extravagant territories, practically inaccessible from the French possessions on the Atlantic coast, annexations in the mountains of the moon, which might, for all the good they do to us, as well be in the moon itself.

The article concludes by quoting extracts from the journal of a painter, M. Castellani, who accompanied the Marchand Mission, of a most gloomy and discouraging nature, which may, it is hoped, exercise a wholesome and blunting effect on the "hungry edge of appetite" lately exhibited by the Colonial party for the acquisition of fresh black territories, and for the responsibility of governing more cannibal tribes.

If a hint from the Government has inspired this article, the writer has carried out his instructions with a vengeance; and it will be interesting to observe whether this is but a solitary note, or whether the cry will be taken up by the whole pack.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

(¹) Not reproduced.

No. 209.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, October 11, 1898.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

D. 7.15 P.M.

(No. 169.) Secret and Most Confidential.

October 12, 1898.

Fashoda. I found M. Delcassé very serious this afternoon, and, for the first time, he became excited during our conversation.

He, himself, owned to being annoyed by the articles in the London press on the Parliamentary Paper on the Upper Nile, and especially by one in the "Globe," the

résumé of which, as given by the Havas Agency, he read to me. He said that the language of the English papers rendered his position very difficult, and the international situation much more dangerous. He contrasted the moderation of the Paris press with the excited language of the London dailies, and said that if the provocation was continued on the other side of the Channel it would elicit response here, and make the preservation of peace difficult.

He is right about the tone of the French press, which has become singularly moderate.

But I am inclined to believe that there must have been some unpleasant things said to him to-day at the Cabinet Council in regard to his having allowed such a clear intimation to be given to him about the impossibility of the retention of Fashoda by France, for he talked of the possibility of retiring, and said that another Minister would not be so accommodating.

He read to me nearly all Baron de Courcel's long report of his conversation with you on the 5th instant, and said that he wished me to hear it, as the Baron had quite correctly represented the views of his Government.

I thanked him for this communication, saying that my messenger did not arrive until to-morrow, and that I could not, therefore, have received from your Lordship any account of this interview sooner.

He wished it to be understood that our whole conversation was private and unofficial, and that not a word of it should be published; but he gave me to understand that if we would make things easy for him in form he would be conciliatory in substance.

He said that he was quite willing to discuss the evacuation of Fashoda in connection with the delimitation of the Franco-Egyptian frontier, and he seems to me to be resigned to the eventual, but not immediate, retreat of Marchand's expedition if unaccompanied by any incident which might be considered humiliating to France; but I fancy that he would not like Marchand to descend the Nile.

He insists that the greater portion of the Bahr-el-Ghazal is effectively occupied, and warmly resented my throwing doubts on this. He quoted the assurances of M. Liotard, who has just arrived, as to this point.

He repeatedly begged me to consider all this as quite unofficial, and to be reported to your Lordship most confidentially.

I entered myself into no discussion, as I have constantly maintained to him that I had no authority to discuss.

M. Delcassé observed that your Lordship had told M. de Courcel that the matter must be conducted in Paris, and that I had instructions; but I stated to him that you referred to the views which I had already expressed several times on the part of Her Majesty's Government, and that I had no authority whatever to modify in any way my previous attitude.

His Excellency seemed very despondent, and said he was sick of telling me that he is sincerely anxious to avoid a rupture. His good intentions in this respect seem to be disregarded, if not worse, by Her Majesty's Government, and the knowledge of his friendly disposition towards us is injuring his position here. If he has to retire, his successor, whoever he may be, will certainly not err in the same direction.

Amongst other things he remarked that he was quite unconscious of having acted in any way discourteously, but that our attitude of "intransigence" was hardly to be called amiable.

For the rest, his arguments, like those of M. de Courcel, went over the old ground of the French having just as much right to be on the Nile as the English, Germans and Belgians, but I repeat that I think that he is prepared to retreat eventually, and after negotiation, from this position if we can build him a golden bridge for that retrograde movement.

Baron de Courcel to the Marquess of Salisbury.⁽¹⁾

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

(Particulière.)

Mon cher Lord Salisbury.

*Ambassade de France, à Londres,
le 12 Octobre, 1898.*

En me rappelant les mots par lesquels vous avez résumé l'objet de notre entretien d'aujourd'hui, et en me référant au texte de mes instructions, je crains qu'il ne se produise un malentendu sur la portée réelle de mes paroles. Le territoire que le Gouvernement Français a considéré depuis longtemps comme rentrant dans sa sphère, parce qu'il le regarde comme la continuation naturelle et le débouché nécessaire de ses possessions du Congo, comprend le pays qui s'étend au nord de la frontière du Congo Belge jusqu'à sa rencontre avec le Nil, sur la rive gauche de ce fleuve. La limite pourrait en être arrêtée au nord, par voie de transaction, à l'embouchure du Bahr-el-Ghazal; elle suivrait ensuite le cours de cette rivière jusqu'à son confluent avec le Bahr-el-Arab, puis le Bahr-el-Arab jusqu'à la ligne de démarcation qui restera à fixer.

Veillez, &c.

ALPH. DE COURCEL.

⁽¹⁾ [Enclosure in despatch No. 369 from Salisbury to Monson of the 12th October, 1898., printed *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9055), CXII, pp. 898-9.]

The Marquess of Salisbury to Baron de Courcel.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

Private.

My dear Ambassador.

Hatfield House, October 13, 1898.

I beg to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of yesterday. Without it I think I should have misunderstood the effect of the observations which you made during our conversation yesterday. The claim asserted in your instructions is quite new to me, and, as far as I know, has never been officially made on behalf of the French Government.

It is not part of my duty to discuss it now, but in abstaining from doing so I am not in any degree admitting its validity. I only make this observation to prevent any possible misunderstanding.

Believe me, &c.

SALISBURY.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

(No. 525.)

My Lord,

Paris, D. October 16, 1898.

R. October 17, 1898.

It has occurred to me, while reading your Lordship's despatch No. 355A of the 6th instant, that I did not lay any stress upon the irritation shown by M. Delcassé at the statement, faithfully repeated by Baron de Courcel in his report of his conversation with your Lordship, of the secrecy with which M. Marchand's expedition was organised and carried out.

It is a sore point with M. Delcassé, and one which has caused him to harp upon his theory that there never has been a Marchand Mission, but that the presence of that gentleman, with his scanty Senegalese following at Fashoda, is simply the development of a policy of expansion in progress for more than five years, and about which there has been no concealment. M. Delcassé, however, has admitted to me that M. Marchand is "en l'air" at Fashoda, although he resented with warmth my suggestion that no effective French occupation could be claimed over the greater part of the region watered by the Bahr-el-Gazal. . . . [Details follow.]

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 213.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3397.

(No. 532.) Most Confidential.

My Lord,

Paris, October 21, 1898.

Count Mouravieff left Paris yesterday for Vienna after five day's stay. . . .⁽¹⁾

I believe that among my colleagues it is thought that the result of Count Mouravieff's presence will be found to have been encouragement to the French Government in the attitude which they have assumed. It is, of course, well understood that any tendency towards the disturbance of international peace must be eminently distasteful to Russia, but it is argued that the latter Power has hitherto done so little for her Ally that it would have been difficult for Count Mouravieff to decline to show some intention of giving his best support to France in the existing emergency. . . .⁽²⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽¹⁾ [Details upon Anglo-French position.]

⁽²⁾ [Personal details.]

No. 214.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, October 21, 1898.

F.O. France 3400.

D. 1.45 P.M.

Tel. (No. 175.) Secret. P.

R. October 21.

The French Minister for Foreign Affairs, whom I saw this morning, told me that the greatest irritation had been caused here by the speeches of the Duke of Devonshire and of the Chancellor of the Exchequer on the subject of Fashoda, especially by that of the latter. A large number of Members of the Legislature were waiting to see M. Delcassé when I arrived at the Ministry, and he told me that he had already interviewed many other Deputies and Senators, men representing almost every shade of opinion in both Chambers, quite unconnected with the press, who had come to protest against the language used, and to insist on its being officially answered here.

He was accused of being too weak, but added that, imbued as he was with the conviction that war between England and France over such a question as Fashoda would be an unparalleled calamity, he had all along been ready to discuss M. Marchand's recall, provided that it was not forced upon him as an ultimatum. He then reverted to the question of the occupation by France of the Bahr-el-Ghazal. Ten regular posts, he said, had already been established there, and were in working order; their maintenance involved the expenditure of large sums of money, and he must adhere to the contention that the action of France in occupying these territories had been entirely justified, seeing that they had been abandoned by Egypt through the declarations of Nubar Pasha and of General Gordon, declarations by which England

herself had profited, for it was upon their effect that she had acted in her Agreements with Italy and Belgium,, and in her own progress in Equatorial Africa.

I replied that I was not authorised to discuss questions of right, and that I was therefore obliged to confine myself to the one point, namely, the expedition of Commandant Marchand to Fashoda; it seemed, however, impossible for any one to deny that that expedition, carrying him as it did to a distance of 300 or 400 miles in advance of his nearest posts in the Bahr-el-Ghazal, had been a deliberate attempt to obstruct our advance up the Nile Valley, and to intercept our line of communication between North and South Africa, the establishment of which, as all Europe knows, is the object of our policy.

The impression produced on me by the language employed by M. Delcassé is that the French Government foresee that they will be unable to maintain their contention as regards M. Marchand, but that, until they can announce that negotiations have begun on their claims to the west of the Nile, they will decline to withdraw him.

I have marked this telegram Secret, and M. Delcassé begged me to consider the whole of our conversation as unofficial, and not for publication.

No. 215.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3400.

Paris, October 25, 1898.

Tel. (No. 185.) Secret and Most Confidential. P.

D. 12:30 P.M.

With reference to your Lordship's secret telegram of last night, I learn from a source which, in my opinion, is entirely trustworthy, that the advice which M. Delcassé received from Count Mouravieff was almost textually as follows:—

“Do not give England any pretext for attacking you at present. At a later date an opportunity will be found by Russia for opening the whole question of Egypt.”

This I believe to have been taken down in writing by M. Delcassé, to be submitted to M. Brisson and the President.

My own opinion is that Count Mouravieff neither categorically refused, nor contingently promised, the support of Russia in the present emergency.

No. 216.

Sir T. Sanderson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

(Private.)(¹)

October 25, 1898.

Dear Lord Salisbury,

De Courcel has been here, but at rather less length than usual.

He expressed much regret that you were putting off seeing him till after the Cabinet, which he seemed to think portended something in the nature of an ultimatum.

I rather combated this view.

Believe me, always,

Yours very sincerely,

T. H. SANDERSON.

MINUTES.

I think I had better not see him till I have seen the Cabinet. I should have nothing to say to him.

S.

Answered accordingly]. Oct. 25/98, 11 P.M. [T. H. S.].

(¹) From the Sanderson MSS.

No. 217.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Rome, October 26, 1898.

F.O. Italy 785.

D. 3 P.M.

Tel. (No. 38.) Secret.

R. 6.35 P.M.

Foreign Minister informed me confidentially this morning that in view of the activity at Toulon he was arranging with his colleagues to have such preparations made at once at the Naval ports of Genoa, Spezia, and Madalena as would enable them to be put in a state of defence at a moment's notice. They were at present, he said, entirely on a peace footing. In the event of a war between France and England, Italy could only remain neutral or side with England, and he foresaw the possibility of France sending her fleet, even before war was declared, as she did under the First Empire, to make demands on Italy. It was necessary therefore that they should be in a position to defend their neutrality; and he asked me earnestly to request Her Majesty's Government, in the event of affairs taking a serious turn, to give Italian Government the earliest possible warning.

No. 218.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, October 27, 1898.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

D. 6.30 P.M.

Tel. (No. 189.) Most Secret.

R. 10 P.M.

I feel I can now state with positive assurance that France can count on more than moral support on the part of Russia in the event of a rupture with England. Your Lordship is aware that this has all along been my opinion, which was founded upon statement made to me by the Minister for Foreign Affairs and reported in my telegram No. 154 of September 28th, that France could not stand alone in the struggle.

No. 219.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir P. Currie.

F.O. Italy 785.

Tel. (No. 152.) Secret.

Foreign Office, October 27, 1898.

Your telegram No. 38.

Pray thank Foreign Minister warmly for his friendly communication. Such information as we have of the preparations at Toulon does not point to intentions of immediate attack, but it is of course necessary to take precautions in time. As far as we are concerned we shall endeavour to avoid any step which may seem aggressive or provocative, but we are unable to discuss questions of frontier between Egypt and the French Congo so long as the French flag remains at Fashoda. In present state of affairs at Paris it is difficult to foretell how long the tension may last or to what solution it may tend.

We shall be glad to give any useful information to Italian Government and to receive any which they can communicate.

S.

No. 220.

*Sir T. Sanderson to M. de Courcel.*Private.⁽¹⁾ Personal.

65, Wimpole Street, W.,

My dear Ambassador,

October 28, 1898.

With reference to the observation I made in conversation this afternoon and of which you wished to take note I think I am quite correct in saying that we had never made any official request for the removal of M. Marchand and his party from Fashoda, but that Sir E. Monson had only verbally communicated telegrams from the Sirdar reporting M. Marchand's expectation of orders to that effect, and expressing his own hope that they would be given.

But I am afraid I went too far in adding that no official statement had been made that the presence of the party at Fashoda was an obstacle to negotiations or discussions, because from what I now hear from Lord Salisbury he did make the statement to you yesterday.

I think however that it was the first part of my remark that you wished to report.

Believe me.

Yours very sincerely.

T. H. SANDERSON.

MINUTE.

This will do perfectly.—S.

⁽¹⁾ From the Sanderson MSS.

No. 221.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3397.

(No. 554.) Secret and Most Confidential.

Paris, D. October 28, 1898.

My Lord,

R. October 29, 1898.

The Ministerial crisis, according to what M. Delcassé told me yesterday, may very soon be terminated, but the definite composition of the Cabinet, his Excellency gave me to understand, depends, as regards the portfolio of Foreign Affairs, upon the attitude of Her Majesty's Government; and M. Delcassé assured me repeatedly that he could not continue in office were his proposals for the guarantee of an outlet by the Bahr-el-Ghazal, as a condition for the immediate evacuation of Fashoda, rejected by them.

His Excellency said, in answer to my enquiries, that the composition of any Cabinet which might be formed at this moment would admit of his remaining as Minister for Foreign Affairs. The feeling in his favour, caused by the publication of the Yellow Book, was practically universal in the Chamber, so much so, that he might have counted upon a long term of office at the Quai d'Orsay. "It is you," said his Excellency, "who make it impossible for me to remain."

M. Delcassé, who was much moved, having gone over most of his old arguments, protested against the humiliation which, he insisted, we are desirous of inflicting on France, and which, if persisted in, would produce a feud which it would take a long course of years to heal.

I replied that there was no intention to humiliate France, and that I must beg to be allowed to say frankly that I could not for my part understand the French attitude.

The situation in which France finds herself is no doubt embarrassing, but we have done nothing to bring it about. I did not wish to say anything which might aggravate matters, but I must maintain that it is France's own deliberate act which has brought her into difficulties, and I must repudiate all responsibility for England for the consequences which might follow.

M. Delcassé continued to inveigh against our want of appreciation of the susceptibilities of a great nation. France, said he, is the country of sentiment, and if

England had chosen she could have attached France to her by consideration for that sentiment. As it is, France would be driven to cultivate the assistance of Powers which would be only too glad to co-operate with her against English colonial policy, and he hinted that even Germany would not be averse from coming to an understanding with France for this end.

This led his Excellency up to the execution of a *coup*, which he had undoubtedly prepared for my benefit. He observed that he had several times stated to me that, in the event of a conflict with England, France would not stand alone, but would have support behind her, and that he would now give me the proof that he had stated the simple truth. "This," said he, taking up a collection of printed papers, "this is the original scheme of the Yellow Book on the Upper Nile. Now read this extract;" and he showed me a telegram from the French Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg, stating that he was authorised by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs to assure the French Government that the latter entirely approved their views and procedure in regard to the Upper Nile, and would associate themselves with any step ("toutes les démarches") which might become necessary in consequence.

There were, said M. Delcassé, four other telegrams or despatches in the original scheme of the Yellow Book, of the same tenour, which I was at liberty to see if I wanted more proof. He had suppressed them (the one I saw was scored out with red chalk) because, as he had stated to me before, he wished to make the publication conciliatory, and had thought that the appearance of such documents would rouse excitement here. He had done so to the loss of a certain amount of popularity, as he has been constantly attacked for not having been able to give actual proof of Russian sympathy and encouragement. He had, however, deprived himself of this opportunity of scoring a point in his own favour, because he was desirous above all things of keeping down excitement.

In reply, I said that I did not desire to see any more of these communications, the existence of which I at once accepted on his word. But I must state, without reservation, that in the interest of peace I rejoiced that he had not published them, as they would have been interpreted in England as a menace, and would have been resented accordingly. When it came to the employment of such arguments, Englishmen were just as ready to lose their temper as Frenchmen.

M. Delcassé seemed somewhat surprised at the warmth of my rejoinder: but, after a few moments' silence, observed that after all he was now a "Ministre démissionnaire," and that practically our conversation could not be, especially on this subject, anything but private; and as such he must ask me to consider it. At any rate he wished it to be understood that it was never to be published in a Blue Book. He had made me this confidence with the intention of showing that he had loyally carried out his promise of making his Yellow Book as conciliatory as possible.

I readily agreed that I would consider the whole conversation as perfectly unofficial, and if he liked to say so, private; but as I cannot but think that M. Delcassé meant it all to be reported to your Lordship, I have, upon mature reflection, decided upon putting it on record in this form, with the expression of my hope that M. Delcassé's wish as to its secrecy may be respected. I have seen and heard from so many quarters that an entirely different view as to Russian sympathy and support has been submitted on excellent authority to your Lordship that, as I have always held another opinion myself, I am not sorry to be able to quote this confirmation of the conclusion to which I had already come. In stating this I think it right to add that I have not the slightest doubt that during his visit to Paris, Count Mouravieff did all he could to persuade the French Government not to take any step which would provoke an attack from England, and that his words have had their effect.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5052.
(No. 558.) Most Confidential.
My Lord.

Paris, D. October 29, 1898.
R. October 31, 1898.

I called without any appointment on M. Delcassé this morning, and found his Excellency more than a little irate at the "escapade" of M. Marchand.⁽¹⁾ He could not, he said, understand how an officer in such a position could have believed himself at liberty to quit his post without permission.

He proceeded to inform me, after warning me that our conversation must, in view of his being a "Ministre démissionnaire," be regarded as confidential and unofficial, that he was going to send M. Marchand at once back from Cairo; and that to-night Captain Baratier would have to start for Marseilles and Egypt, and convey his instructions to his Chief.

I was unprepared for this view of the case, and I said to M. Delcassé that it seemed to me natural that M. Marchand should think that he had best deliver his Report himself, and that he had doubtless been animated by the best intentions in starting on this trip.

M. Delcassé, however, reiterated that the step taken by M. Marchand was incredible and unpardonable, and that good intentions could be no excuse for it. Already all the journalists were attacking him (the Minister), and accusing him of having sent secret orders to M. Marchand to come away.

His Excellency stated further that his own continuance in office depended very much upon the definite answer to be given by Her Majesty's Government to his request that the French Government should, in some way or another, be assured that their order to M. Marchand to evacuate Fashoda would be followed by an undertaking that England will negotiate on the principle of the grant to France of an outlet for her commerce to the Nile. If this is not acceded to, a humiliation will be inflicted on France, which he, personally, cannot accept; and as a war with England, which is the only alternative, would be alike contrary to his avowed policy, and repulsive to his principles, he would be obliged to retire from his post as Minister of Foreign Affairs.

I did all in my power to persuade him that there would be no humiliation in his acknowledging that M. Marchand had no political mission, and had never been ordered by his Government to advance to the Nile, but had gone there on his own initiative and in an excess of zeal: but his Excellency replied that, much as he should have liked to do this, he was prevented from taking such a line by our declaration of our sole right, in partnership with Egypt, to appropriate the territories recently in the hands of the Khalifa.

I find it quite impossible to shake these obstinate views of M. Delcassé, and I confess that I was this morning disappointed at being able to make no impression upon him, as I had hoped that he would have hailed M. Marchand's excursion down the Nile without any orders from home as facilitating an absolute and entire retreat from an untenable position.

I have, &c.
EDMUND MONSON.

(1) [Major Marchand left Fashoda and reached Khartoum on the 28th October, whence he proceeded to Cairo.]

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5052.

Foreign Office, October 30, 1898.

Tel. (No. 255.) Confidential.

D. 1:30 P.M.

The following is an unofficial record of my conversation with the French Ambassador on the 27th. He has a copy and sent one to French Minister for Foreign Affairs last night.

In conversation with the French Ambassador this afternoon (the 27th October) I intimated to him that so long as M. Marchand floated the French flag at Fashoda, any discussions between the English and French Governments upon frontier question in that region were impossible, for if we took part in them we should be admitting the legality of M. Marchand's position.

The French Ambassador with great energy and at some length repudiated the doctrine that M. Marchand's position was illegal. He said, however, that the reports received from him seemed to his Excellency to show that Fashoda could never furnish the outlet on the Nile which France might obtain; and that therefore it was of no use to her. He thought it therefore not improbable that M. Marchand would receive orders to retire. I said I was glad to receive this intimation, though it was accompanied by claims of right which it was quite out of my power to admit.

It was not the existence of a deep difference of opinion upon the question of right which was inconsistent with negotiation, but the presence of a French flag upon ground to which in our belief France had no title.

If M. Marchand should receive the orders the French Ambassador had indicated, the obstacle to a discussion of the frontier would be removed and whatever was at present abnormal in the diplomatic relations between the two countries would cease. It would be open to the French Government to raise a discussion upon the frontier in those regions and their representations would be considered by Her Majesty's Government in the same spirit which they would bring to the consideration of frontier questions which might arise between England and any other nation in any part of the world. That discussion must, however, necessarily be protracted, for it must turn in some degree on historical and geographical information which we did not fully possess. We would gladly take measures to complete it, and in doing so we should count on the co-operation of officers in the French territory. But until we had received and considered it, we could not give or imply any kind of pledge as to the conclusions to which we should be willing to come.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Lord Cromer.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5051.

Foreign Office, October 30, 1898.

Tel. (No. 122.)

D. 5:50 P.M.

Sirdar is strongly impressed with the inexpediency of letting either Marchand or Baratier go back to Fashoda. I concur with him in urging that the gunboat now at Khartoum should start at once without delay, so that if you are asked to send these two officers back you may reply with truth that there is not likely to be any gunboat starting south from Khartoum for some time. Delcassé is very angry with Marchand, and has telegraphed to him to return immediately. He is also sending Baratier back.

No. 225.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3399.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5052.

Paris, D. October 30, 1898.

Tel. (No. 195.) Confidential.

R. October 31, 1898.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 255, Confidential, of to-day.

I am gratified in finding in your Lordship's record of your conversation with the French Ambassador on the 27th October a statement of the position taken by Her Majesty's Government which enables me authoritatively to meet M. Delcassé's reiterated reproaches for refusing to enter into any discussion of French pretensions in connection with their territorial rights.

His Excellency has always assumed that his rhetoric is unanswerable, and has never chosen to content himself with my simple refusal to discuss anything beyond the deliberate illegality of the act committed by M. Marchand. As your Lordship is aware, I have never succeeded in making the least impression upon him on this point, although, to judge by the tone of certain organs of the press, there are some of his countrymen whose convictions are not so assured as the Minister's.

From his extreme irritation at M. Marchand's departure from Fashoda, and his order to that officer to return thither at once, I presume that M. Delcassé's pertinacity is invincible, and that the best chance of a solution would be his retirement from office, but I doubt whether any new Government would venture to start on its career under the accusation of having commenced by truckling to English demands.

No. 226.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Paris, November 3, 1898.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5052.

D. 6 P.M.

Tel. (No. 200.)

R. 7.30 P.M.

After the Cabinet Council this morning orders were telegraphed at once to French Ambassador to inform your Lordship that Fashoda would be evacuated with the least possible delay.

MM. Marchand and Baratier have been instructed to return to Fashoda to carry out this decision, and Foreign Minister has expressed to me his hope that Her Majesty's Government will give them every facility to accomplish this. The mission has ceased to have any political character and must henceforth be considered a simple inoffensive troop armed only for its own defence against native attack. Foreign Minister said he would lose no time in settling the route to be taken by the mission, and is almost decided upon Eastern one *via* Jibouti or Obok.

No. 227.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5052.

Foreign Office, November 4, 1898.

Tel. (No. 262.)

D. 6.30 P.M.

The French Ambassador informed me to-day that the decision had been taken by his Government to withdraw M. Marchand's party from Fashoda and to send him back there to carry out that decision, and that orders to that effect had been sent to Cairo.

No. 228.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Turkey (Egypt) 5052.

(No. 571.) Confidential.

Paris, D. November 4, 1898.

My Lord,

R. November 5, 1898.

At the interview recorded in my immediately preceding despatch,⁽¹⁾ M. Delcassé showed considerable emotion.

He said that it had cost him much to continue in office with the prospect of having to adopt the step which he had just communicated to me. Such very urgent appeals had, however, been made to his patriotism, that he had felt that he must sacrifice his own strong inclination to the acceptance of a responsibility which he had been told it was his duty to assume. He had done so knowing that he exposed himself to a certain loss of popularity, and foreseeing also that he should have a very disagreeable experience in defending in the Tribune the policy upon which the Cabinet had decided.

I could not but answer that I was glad that he had made up his mind to assume the responsibility, however irksome it might seem to him; and I confess I said this honestly, for, however tenacious M. Delcassé may have been of a position in every way unjustifiable, I am bound to state that he has never in the warmth of discussion outstepped the limit of courteous controversy, or acted in a manner inconsistent with the dignity of his important office.

I have also found him very straightforward and explicit in his language:

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

(¹) [The interview was that of the 3rd November.]

No. 229.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Rome, November 7, 1898.

F.O. Italy 785.

D. 11.40 A.M.

(No. 55.) Secret.

R. November 8, 8 A.M.

Foreign Minister told me that French Chargé d'Affaires had to-day shown renewed uneasiness respecting Anglo-French difficulty and had sounded him as to what Italy would do in case of war. Foreign Minister replied that as hostilities would probably take place very near the coasts of Italy it was absolutely necessary for her to be prepared to defend her neutrality if necessary. Russian Ambassador had also called and had dropped some hints as to necessity of obtaining security for the freedom of the Suez Canal and raising the Egyptian question with that object. The Foreign Minister had replied that he should deeply regret the raising of the Egyptian question as it would almost certainly lead to war.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3397.

(No. 585.)

My Lord.

Paris, D. November 8, 1898.

R. November 9, 1898.

During the last few days I have seen all the members of the new Cabinet either at their respective offices or at this Embassy; and although in each case conversation has been of a general nature and Egyptian questions have been avoided, I could not but be struck with the courtesy, and I may say cordiality, displayed in every instance by the Ministers, and by their professed desire to be on the best of terms with England.

M. de Freycinet, who has accepted the Portfolio of War, was particularly friendly, and laid great stress upon his pleasant relations as Foreign Minister with Lord Lyons. . . .⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽¹⁾ [Personal details.]

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1275.

(No. 319.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. November 9, 1898.

R. November 14, 1898.

I called upon Count Goluchowski on Saturday afternoon, his Excellency having only returned the previous day from his estates in Galicia.

Our conversation almost immediately turned to the differences which have arisen between Her Majesty's Government and that of France respecting the territories watered by the Upper Nile and its affluents. His Excellency seemed much interested by what I was able to tell him of the opportunities I had had during my recent visit to England of assuring myself that in this question your Lordship and Her Majesty's Government, giving expression to the unanimous sentiment of the country, had taken up a position from which there could be no thought of receding. Fortunately for our relations with France, the Government of that country had finally been convinced of the determination of Her Majesty's Government in this matter, and had extricated themselves not a moment too soon from the chief difficulty they had got into by their unwarrantable attempt to establish themselves on our path at Fashoda.

Count Goluchowski evinced great satisfaction at the announcement which your Lordship had made on this point the day before at the Guildhall banquet in honour of Lord Kitchener. His Excellency gave expression to the opinion that the French Government had acted very foolishly in this business, but at the same time—it seemed to me somewhat illogically—spoken well of the share taken in it by M. Delcassé. I observed that although my information went to show that M. Delcassé had excellent qualities—such as cool-headedness and a conciliatory disposition and was personally well thought of by the diplomatists we had to deal with, amongst others by Her Majesty's Ambassador and the Austro-Hungarian Chargé d'Affaires—it seemed to me impossible to hold him blameless for an expedition which had been started under his auspices as Colonial Minister, and the inconvenient results of which he now had to deal with as Minister for Foreign Affairs. As far as he was concerned, the situation was not without a touch of poetical justice.

Count Goluchowski seemed much impressed by the serious preparations which were being made by Her Majesty's Government. I said that they were the visible sign of a firm resolve to go to war rather than yield in the difficulty with France. Besides this, however, it was my personal conviction that there exists in England a strong sense of irritation which has been gradually developed by the contemptuous tone assumed towards us for a long time past by certain organs of the continental press, who, from our unwillingness to resort to the extremity of war, argue that we are always certain to yield in the end rather than assert ourselves by force of arms. The German papers more particularly had distinguished themselves by these taunts, and their example had, I regretted to observe, been followed by some of the organs of the Vienna press who, till quite recently, had assured their readers, in true Berlin fashion, that nothing would come of the English rattling of swords ("Säbelrasseln"). The result of this, in my humble opinion, had been what I might almost describe as a dangerous mood inspired all classes in England at the present time. Our critics and detractors had succeeded in thoroughly rousing the national spirit, and while Her Majesty's Government might be trusted not to commit the country lightly to war, it was an excellent thing that they should be conscious of having behind them a united nation, ready for any effort or sacrifice that might be called for in the interests of the Empire.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 232.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Rome, November 10, 1898.

F.O. Italy 785.

D. 4.5 P.M.

(No. 56.) Secret.

R. 7 P.M.

Foreign Minister informs me that French Ambassador who has just returned from leave of absence called on him yesterday and after speaking of Fashoda question and of English armaments made pressing enquiries as to whether there was any understanding between Italy and Great Britain. Foreign Minister replied that only understanding was one for mutual good offices which had existed ever since Italy achieved her independence and had been faithfully executed on both sides. Russian Ambassador also spoke yesterday of the Fashoda question, but apparently only with a view of eliciting information as to armaments, which the Foreign Minister said he did not possess.

No. 233.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3397.

(No. 598.)

Paris, D. November 11, 1898.

My Lord,

R. November 12, 1898.

From all the sources of information to which I have been able to address myself, I gather that, although the immediate effect of your Lordship's speech at the Lord Mayor's Banquet was a decided relief to pressing anxiety here, the views which you expressed as to the possibility of complications in a not very distant future have not

appreciably lightened the gloom which oppresses France at this moment.
 . . [Details] . .

France appears to me to be staggered; and in consequence calls herself humiliated. I should like to think that the feeling of resentment will be transitory; but the contrary is, I fear, the more likely. What she would probably like would be to utilise the next two or three years' respite with which the obligations imposed by the preparations for, and the carrying out of, the coming International Exhibition may afford her, for the purpose of increasing her naval strength. . . .⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽¹⁾ [Personal details.]

No. 234.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3397.

(No. 599.)

Paris, D. November 11, 1898.

My Lord,

R. November 12, 1898.

The language which M. Delcassé held to me the day before yesterday about Crete, when I asked him his opinion as to Russian and Italian proposals, seemed to be tinged with a certain bitterness. The gist of what he said was that, in order to maintain the accord between the four Powers, France would agree to anything to which the other three assented.

In fact, his tone seemed to be pitched in the "humiliation" key, and his meaning to be—"What is the use of France having an opinion on her own about anything now-a-days?"

I was the first of his visitors on that reception afternoon, but those of my colleagues whom I have since seen tell me that he was throughout the afternoon profoundly depressed.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 235.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Belgium 699.

(No. 258.) Confidential.

Brussels, D. November 27, 1898.

My Lord,

R. November 28, 1898.

The change of appreciation of Great Britain, which has come over the Belgian Press within the last few days, is another proof of the deep impression produced on the Continent by your Lordship's able diplomatic treatment of the Fashoda incident, and I notice that when Belgian officials discuss current politics with me now they consider France to be completely cowed for the moment, and the leading Power of the world to be, at present, Great Britain.

Baron Lambert, who was dining last night at this Legation, spoke to me quite in this sense, but added that he was watching with intense interest to see what line the Emperor of Germany would now take.

The Baron said that he knew for a fact that it was the conflict between England and France which had hurried the Emperor back from the East, and all would now depend on what this gifted but impulsive Sovereign might consider would most advance the interests of his own Empire.

Baron Lambermont expressed, as usual of late, earnest anxiety as to what the near future might have in store for the world, and said that he looked upon internal affairs in Paris as hopeless; a crisis and radical change of some kind there, before long, appeared to him inevitable.

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The Fashoda controversy was closed by a Declaration relative to British and French spheres of influence in Central Africa. Signed at London, the 21st March, 1899. *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9134) CXII, pp. 958-9.]

CHAPTER V. ANGLO-FRENCH RELATIONS, 1899.

I.—NORTH AFRICA.

No. 236.

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Italy 784.

(No. 214.)

My Lord,

Rome, D. November 4, 1898.

R. November 8, 1898.

With reference to my telegram No. 52 of the 3rd instant, I have the honour to enclose a translation of the *pro-memoria*⁽¹⁾ which was handed to me by Admiral Canevaro relative to the objections that would be entertained by the Italian Government to any Arrangement between Her Majesty's Government and the French Government that would give the latter any rights over the Hinterland of Tripoli.

The ground for this communication was a report received from the Italian Agent at Cairo of a conversation with Lord Cromer, in which his Lordship is supposed to have said that compensation for Fashoda might possibly be found to the east of Lake Tchad.

I pointed out to Admiral Canevaro that even if compensation were conceded to France in that direction, it would not affect Italian claims. He admitted that this was the case, but said that he felt bound to make a friendly statement of the views of the Italian Government, in order that no misapprehension might arise respecting them.

I was able to assure him that Her Majesty's Government were fully aware of Italian susceptibilities in regard to Tripoli and its Hinterland, and that I had no doubt that they would be careful to respect them.

I have, &c.

PHILIP CURRIE.

(1) Not reproduced.

No. 237.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3398.

(No. 675.)

My Lord,

Paris, D. December 9, 1898.

R. December 10, 1898.

As I see by the public press that an importance which certainly appears to me as exaggerated as it was unexpected has been given in England to the speech in which I returned thanks for my health at the dinner of the British Chamber of Commerce on the evening of the 6th instant. I venture to trouble your Lordship with a few remarks in relation to it.

The gathering was, I may say, exclusively British: no French officials were present. The only Frenchman there, as far as I know, was a business man, who thanked me for the manner in which I had spoken of his country. There were also two or three Americans.

To such an audience, practically my own countrymen, I thought that I might speak more freely than usual, and certainly in a way very different from that which I would have adopted had there been an admixture of French guests. Nevertheless, I feel pretty confident that there was really nothing in what I said to which legitimate objection could be taken in this country.

I confess that I took advantage of the opportunity to criticise the language used by some organs of the press on both sides of the Channel, and to express the opinion that, in spite of their irresponsible character, such journals could not but do harm by the employment of intemperate language. I did not conceal either that I thought some of the minor politicians in England had done the same.

Mainly, I tried to show that British diplomacy is honest, truthful, and straightforward, and that the policy of Her Majesty's Government had been eminently of this nature. I did not comment at all upon the official policy of France, but I ventured to say that there was no deliberate hostility in England against France, and that I personally believed that the bulk of the French nation had no such feeling towards England.

At the end of my speech I adverted to M. Deloncle's proposal to establish French schools for the education of the natives of Khartoum and Fashoda: and said that, while this was purely the proposal of a private individual, any official encouragement of the plan would be to return to the policy of pin-pricking, which might have an effect very different to what I am sure is aimed at by French sentiment in general.

The serious French journals have accepted my observations without resentment. Some of the Boulevard papers have reproduced distorted versions of isolated passages, and taken them as texts for abuse.

M. Delcassé, whom I have had to see three times on business since the publication of my speech, told me that he and his colleagues found no fault with anything which I had said, except on the one point of an allusion to the ephemeral character of French Ministries.

I reminded his Excellency that I had before now stated to him my opinion that the short duration of French Ministers in office must exercise a prejudicial effect on the conduct of foreign affairs in so far as it conduced to the prolongation, and even the neglect, of questions in controversy; and his Excellency did not dispute the accuracy of my contention.

Last night M. Ribot and some other Deputies went to see M. Delcassé (who has been confined to his house with sore throat) and mentioned their intention of putting a question to him in the Chamber in regard to my alleged interference in the domestic affairs of France.

M. Delcassé repeated to them the observations I had made as above stated, and said that he was quite ready to reiterate them in the Chamber, constituting as they did in his view a complete answer to the allegation. He sent to ask me to call this morning, and having recounted what had happened, said that, upon reflection, he thought it would put a stop to all further trouble and to the proposed Parliamentary question if a communiqué were at once inserted in the Havas Agency in the terms of the enclosed extract.

I assented to this suggestion without difficulty.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

Enclosure in No. 237.

Newspaper Extract.

Les commentaires qu'a provoqués le récent discours de Sir Edmund Monson au banquet de la Chambre Anglaise de Commerce montrent que la pensée de l'Ambassadeur n'a pas été comprise ou qu'elle n'a pas été exprimée avec une suffisante clarté.

Sir Edmund Monson n'a nullement voulu s'ingérer dans les affaires intérieures de la France, ni apprécier sa politique, car il n'a aucune qualité pour le faire et ce n'est pas son rôle. D'ailleurs, toute son attitude proteste contre tout soupçon d'intention malveillante.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3398.

(No. 677.) Secret.

My Lord,

Paris, D. December 9, 1898.

R. December 10, 1898.

I have heard indirectly, but from a very authoritative source, that M. Cambon is empowered to propose to your Lordship that all the outstanding questions in dispute between England and France should be dealt with as much as possible simultaneously, and a general arrangement come to for a comprehensive settlement. I am assured that the President of the Republic and the present Government are honestly anxious to place the relations between the two countries upon the most cordial footing, and I have certainly no reason to believe that this statement is contrary to the truth.

It corresponds with all that I have heard on several occasions from M. Delcassé's own lips, and especially with what he said in the course of conversation yesterday. He referred to his previous declarations of the trend of his policy, and assured me that nothing could change his belief that the best interests of the two countries—most undoubtedly those of his own—demanded its adoption by the Government of the Republic.

What troubled him was that the naval preparations made in England had not been modified, but were maintained on the same footing, a circumstance which gave some countenance to the report that there is a strong party, not unrepresented in the Cabinet, which wants war at any price.

I said that that was certainly not my opinion, and that we might well make preparations for war as the best means of averting it. With regard to those preparations (which, I observed, were publicly stated to have involved very much less expenditure than people in France would be disposed to believe), I must put this argument very explicitly to him: When matters began to look serious on account of the Fashoda incident, he had more than once told me that France would not stand alone, and that she would be backed up by Russia. Would it not have been an act of culpable negligence on the part of Her Majesty's Government not to provide at once against the combined attack of two powerful nations? I, for my part, must confess that such a menace must justify in my eyes not only the preparations made, but their continuance.

To this M. Delcassé made a reply which, I own, astonished me. He said, speaking very deliberately, that if France had to go to war with England, she would not consider that it would be enough to have the support of Russia alone, but that she would seek for and obtain that of Germany also. He had frequently told me, he said, of the overtures indirectly made by Germany to the French Government. He was convinced that the rival commercial interests of Germany and England would strongly dispose the former to identify her action with that of Russia and France for the purpose of destroying England's maritime and commercial superiority, and he could affirm that recent events had caused in France a very marked turning towards Germany, which might easily be increased to an extent which probably I would not consent to believe. At any rate, I must be aware that public sentiment in Germany is by no means favourable to England.

I replied that if this were so, it seemed to me that Prince Bismark's policy of encouraging France to "embêter" England was being applied in a somewhat novel manner, but that it was not for me to give advice to France as to her own relations with Germany. I did not care to deny that Germany's commercial enterprise had become very active, but I could not, on the other hand, admit that it would cause her to enter upon hostilities with England.

The conversation then dropped, for M. Delcassé was suffering from sore throat, which had laid him up for several days, and I said to him that I would not allow him to exhaust himself upon an academical discussion.

M. Delcassé is a native of the south of France, with all the vivacity characteristic of that region. He speaks well, and is easily carried away by the attraction of an interesting topic. I cannot think that he will, upon reflection, look back upon this conversation with satisfaction, or feel assured of his discretion in having given utterance to such opinions as those recorded above. At any rate, when his Excellency talks of French proclivities towards Germany, I cannot but believe that he has been listening to mischievous and prejudiced politicians, and is misrepresenting the opinion of the large majority of his countrymen. None the less do I feel it right to report at once to your Lordship what he said in the above sense.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 239.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3398.

(No. 716.)

My Lord,

Paris, D. December 29, 1898.

R. December 31, 1898.

Discouraging as is the retrospect over the events of the last twelve months in France, it may well be that an eminent artist is not far wrong, in a caricature which he has published this morning in a widely-circulated journal, and in which the Republic and the President are representing as ejaculating "Perhaps we may regret it" as they gaze upon the vanishing form of the year 1898. For it cannot be denied that however unsatisfactory may appear the history of France during that period, the outlook for the coming year is not more attractive than the reminiscence of its predecessor. . . . ⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽¹⁾ [Details as to public opinion in France.]

No. 240.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3454.

(No. 11.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 11, 1899.

M. Cambon called upon me this afternoon, and proceeded at once to discuss the questions at issue between France and England, which he did at considerable length. His manner was exceedingly conciliatory, and his choice of language was obviously made for the purpose of avoiding any suggestion that might be distasteful to Her Majesty's Government. He, however, guarded himself by saying he was speaking academically—that he was not yet in a position to speak by instructions. What he said, therefore, must be taken subject to this remark. He formally intimated to me that M. Marchand and his party had evacuated Fashoda; and referring to my conversations with M. de Courcel, he assumed that I should now not be indisposed to discuss the differences which separated the two countries at the present time.

I replied that I was quite willing to do so. I thought it better at once to say that there was one point upon which opinion in England was very strongly and specially fixed, and that was the objection of this country to share with France political rights over any portion of the Valley of the Nile. It would not be possible for us to recognise any rights of France over any part of the territory situated upon the eastern slope of the

watershed between the Nile and the Ubanghi. At the same time I pointed out that the commercial outlet upon the Nile which was desired by M. Delcassé was assured to him by the uniform tenor of English policy in all countries. Such an outlet we should readily accord, and protect to the utmost of our power. But no part of it could be under the French flag: it must be commercial, not political.

His Excellency did not repel this observation, or raise any question as to the rights of France in the territory referred to. His language seemed to indicate that the French Government had abandoned the idea of asking that their flag should float in any part of the Valley of the Nile.

He proceeded to speak of the distribution to be made of territory lying to the north and north-west of the Bahr-el-Ghazal. Much of it, he said, was at present without an admitted owner. His own view was that a line could be found, starting from the south-eastern end of Tunis, passing to the east of Lake Chad, leaving Darfur to Egypt, and then separating the Bahr-el-Ghazal from the Ubanghi. His words were carefully weighed, and, though the above seemed to me the only intelligible interpretation of them, I cannot assert that the result to which they appeared to lead was always stated in unambiguous language. I replied that the questions were geographical, and I could not deal with them without maps: and that I required, before going further, to be more fully acquainted by Lord Kitchener and Lord Cromer with the impressions they had derived from their recent expedition to the Soudan: but I readily admitted that his observations, if I rightly understood them, indicated the elements of a settlement at which both countries might arrive without sacrificing their own essential interests. He spoke further of commercial facilities, and the possibility in the future of the establishment of a French commercial position upon the Nile, but he was careful to observe that any settlement that might be established would always be under British domination.

He then spoke slightly of Madagascar. I said that I had more than once observed to his predecessor that the line which his Government appeared disposed to pursue in regard to that island would create great resentment in this country. He did not enter upon the subject at any length. The line, however, which he took was that most of the differences between England and France had really been either caused or rendered much more acute by the protectionist policy which France of recent years had pursued; that he thought the current of opinion by which that policy was carried forward was visibly slackening: that he hoped that in the future protection would receive far less encouragement from French policy than it did at present: but he thought that any violent interference with the present development of French fiscal policy in Madagascar or elsewhere would retard rather than accelerate the end to which he and all other free traders looked. I assented to the opinion that much of the strained feeling between France and England was due to the extravagant protectionist policy that France had pursued.

Some observations were made with respect to the rights claimed by France in connection with the western shore of Newfoundland, but M. Cambon did not show any inclination to enter upon any discussion of that question. He concluded the conversation by saying that on any subject where there was a difference between England and France he was entirely at my disposal, as he was earnestly anxious to contribute, so far as he could, to the harmonious relations between the two countries. He hoped that, if there was any other point upon which misunderstanding was likely in my judgment to arise, I would not fail to acquaint him with it at the earliest possible moment.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3455.

(No. 21.)

Paris, D. January 13, 1899.

My Lord,

R. January 14, 1899.

. . . . (1) From every quarter I hear that the expectation of war with England in the course of the spring is becoming gradually more general, and, as far as I know, preparations to meet this contingency continue in active progress.

The conviction that there exists in England a powerful section of politicians who regard the present moment as so eminently favourable for an attack on France that it would be an act of folly not to profit by it, has been fostered not only by journalistic correspondence, but by information furnished by Frenchmen of repute, who are considered to have access to trustworthy sources of knowledge.

It is clear, also, that similar views are held in continental countries which, although not actively unfriendly to France, have no particular reason to be tender about her, and who certainly do not find themselves in sympathy with her in regard to her domestic attitude at this moment. It is the consciousness of this alienation of sentiment which probably influences the Minister for Foreign Affairs in the reserve which he displays in his dealings with the Representatives of the Triple Alliance, and in his disinclination to discuss the situation with them.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

(1) [Personal details.]

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3455.

(No. 25.)

Paris, D. January 16, 1899.

My Lord,

R. January 18, 1899.

During a conversation which I had with M. Delcassé the day before yesterday, I adverted to the interview which M. Cambon had had last week with your Lordship, and upon which the French press has commented very generally.

M. Delcassé said that your Lordship had originally told the Baron de Courcel that, as long as the French flag floated in the Valley of the Nile, it would be impossible for you to discuss the territorial question. He had therefore instructed M. Cambon, on his return to London after the Christmas holidays, to inform your Lordship officially of the evacuation of Fashoda by M. Marchand, and to place himself at your Lordship's disposal for the discussion of all questions which you might wish to treat.

M. Delcassé proceeded to observe that he had all along told me of his willingness to discuss all outstanding subjects of difference between the two countries, and that he must repeat that the French Government are very desirous of approaching them in a spirit of conciliation, and with the intention of conceding what they properly can. His Excellency added that he was convinced, and had always been so, that if this feeling was reciprocal there was not one cause of difference between France and England which could not be satisfactorily adjusted.

M. Delcassé having confined his observations to generalities of this nature, I did not attempt to elicit confidences which he showed no disposition to make. Indeed, although he had before him an apparently long report from M. Cambon of his conversation with your Lordship, the only remark which he made about it was that he had received it in the morning, and had not yet had time to study it.

I told his Excellency that I had not yet received any official information from your Lordship in regard to your interview with M. Cambon, but that, personally, I felt that it would be a good thing if the French Government would expedite the treatment of the several questions which he had referred to as outstanding, and the gravity of which was certainly not lessened by leaving them alone, or treating them only in a dilatory manner.

M. Delcassé was still so reserved in his language that I felt that it would be impolitic on my part to endeavour to extract from him any indication of his intentions; and I concluded that he remains of the opinion that all overtures are to be made by Her Majesty's Government, and that the French Government consider that, having made their move by the evacuation of Fashoda, they are at liberty to wait until an opening for further discussion is given by your Lordship. Indeed, in stating that M. Cambon had been instructed to place himself at your Lordship's disposal, M. Delcassé appears to me to have implied that he would leave all initiative to Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 243.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3455.

(No. 67.) Secret.

My Lord,

Paris, D. February 3, 1899.

R. February 4, 1899.

I have been much struck by the persistency with which the contingency of war between England and France is declared to be inevitable by the German Emperor in his conversations with Sir Frank Lascelles, and by the fact that Count Münster during his recent visit to Berlin expressed a similar opinion in his interview with Her Majesty's Ambassador.

The natural inference to be drawn from this would be that, whether or not the Emperor had formed his conviction from other sources of information, the reports which he receives from his Embassy at Paris confirm and strengthen his impressions in this sense.

I have not seen Count Münster for more than a few minutes since his return from Berlin, and have had no opportunity of confidential discussion with him; and I am therefore unable to state positively the grounds upon which he has come to the conclusion that war is practically inevitable. It is of course true that the Germans employ every means to acquire information as to what is passing in French arsenals and garrison towns; and there is little doubt that their system of espionage is widespread and very efficient. But the fact that France is arming—indeed has armed—to the teeth is notorious. Such preparations cannot be kept secret; and they are openly avowed in the public press. I do not suppose that it is simply on this account that Count Münster reports to his Imperial master that war cannot be avoided; and yet I do not believe that he hears from members of the French Government anything to warrant this view. Certainly my colleagues, the Ambassadors of Austria, Italy, and Russia, have not latterly spoken to me in this sense, nor do I think that their Military Attachés have heard such language from French officers.

My own opinion is—but I express it with diffidence—that Germany desires to keep up the panic in France, and to do nothing to dissipate the idea that England seeks an occasion for war; and that Germany does this chiefly on account of her apprehensions as to Italian steadfastness. France having failed in the object she set herself by courting Germany, is now, ostentatiously, and with some outside effect, setting her cap at Italy, and it may well be that at Berlin it is considered that there can be no more effective means of preventing Italy from committing herself over much than by holding up before her eyes the spectre of an imminent Anglo-French war.

While reiterating my opinion that nothing is at this moment further from the mind of the French Government than the pursuance of a policy of provocation to England, I need hardly tell your Lordship that all appearances in this country indicate not only a very intelligible desire to adopt every defensive precaution, but a determination to make preparation in time for doing something more than maintain a determined resistance to attack. The measures taken for doubling the railway tracks in the northern Departments of France, the attention paid to the condition and sufficiency of the rolling-stock on all the lines connected with northern ports, seem to mean something more than the simple repelling of an invasion which it is well known is hardly likely to be ever undertaken by an English army. The language of the press in regard to the relations between France and England is becoming offensive in proportion as that of the English press becomes conciliatory. This, however, might have been foreseen, and means nothing more than that it is thought quite safe to resume the normal tone of abuse. Its significance consists in the proof it affords that the mischievous elements which are always at work to irritate certain classes of the population against England are as busy as ever; and that while on the one side of the Channel there is a general disposition to be generous and friendly, the journalists and politicians who can influence public opinion in France have in no degree lost their animosity against the "English enemy."

Whatever, then, may be the momentary moderation of the French Government in regard to the most acute question at issue, I do not expect myself to see any decided disposition to modify in the future the obstinate attitude of the past in the treatment of colonial and commercial questions; and if war is really inevitable, it is, I believe, most likely to be produced by the discovery on the part of the British public that they have been misled in their expectations that the discretion shown in the withdrawal from Fashoda was an example of the conduct which France would adopt in all subsequent controversies. It appears that she intends to utilise the interval secured to her by the coming Exhibition for the purpose of increasing her armaments, in utter disregard of the proposals of her ally, and she will not, I presume, be surprised at seeing that England follows her example.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 244.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3454.

(No. 47.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 15, 1899.

To-day M. Cambon renewed the question of the line to be drawn in Africa between the territories under Anglo-Egyptian and under French control. He said that, accepting the definitive objection of Her Majesty's Government to any arrangement which would admit French sovereignty or the French flag into the basin of the Nile, M. Delcassé did not persist in the views which the Ambassador, on his behalf, had expressed on Wednesday last. He was willing to adopt the proposal which should take the line from the frontier of the Congo State northward, along the water-parting between the waters of the Ubanghi and the Nile. When it reached Darfur the line would be so drawn as to leave Darfur upon the Anglo-Egyptian side. But he begged me to furnish him with a tracing of the frontier which, in our conception, separated Darfur from Wadai. Going further north, the line would, as had been previously arranged, go to the north-east foot of the Tibestu Mountains. M. Delcassé, however, was of opinion that the best mode of recording the Agreement between the two Powers was to make the present Arrangement a Supplement or Annex to the Convention

which was agreed upon in June 1898 in respect to the countries bordering on the Niger and Lake Chad, and which was now awaiting ratification at the hands of the French Chamber. If this view were accepted, words would be added to the Article dealing with Lake Chad in the Convention to which he referred, which would place on record the delimitation which he had just indicated to me. At the same time, all the commercial questions connected with this delimitation might be satisfactorily settled by extending to the territories which it affected the stipulations contained in the IXth Article of the Niger Convention in regard to the commercial privileges conferred reciprocally upon British subjects and French citizens.

I replied that the suggestion, on the whole, seemed to me judicious, and likely to give satisfaction to both Powers, but that before I could give a definitive assent he must allow me some time to take the opinion of persons acquainted with the locality.

His Excellency assented to this proposal, and said that he thought that, in dealing with this Convention as merely part of the Niger Arrangement, we should avoid, in a great measure, the difficulties at Constantinople, which might attach themselves to an independent proposal. I promised his Excellency to obtain the tracing which he wished for of the line between Darfur and Wadai, and to give him a definitive answer as soon as possible.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

No. 245.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3454.

(No. 93.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 15, 1899.

M. Cambon came to me this afternoon, and resumed the discussion upon the African boundary. Your Excellency has already received in writing his proposal with respect to the modifications of the frontier at Zoghaoua and of that abutting on the Bar-el-Gazal. The essence of his proposals was that, if he was to give us all we wanted at Darfur, we should consent to his having a station East of the watershed of the Nile at Tambura in the Bahr-el-Gazal. With respect to Zoghaoua he drew a projected line upon a French map, but did not particularly insist upon its details. I informed him that the station over the watershed of the Bahr-el-Gazal was in our judgment entirely inadmissible. I proposed that, with respect to the other two points, namely, the frontier on the west of Darfur, and the line of division north of the 15th parallel, it would be better so to draw the agreement between us that the details of them should be referred to a commission, and be the subject of a subsequent agreement. We might prescribe to the commission so to draw the boundaries that whatever in former times was under the dominion of Egypt in Darfur should be treated as Egyptian still; and at the Tibestu mountains the line should be so drawn as to bring the Eastern base of those mountains, where they touched upon the plain, within the sphere of France. He appeared generally to assent to this mode of dealing with the difficulty, and said he would immediately refer it to M. Delcassé. Meanwhile, steps are being taken to have the proposed stipulations put into a formal shape at once.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

[NOTE.—The Agreement was signed on the 21st March.]

No. 246.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1284.

(No. 84.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. March 31, 1899.

My Lord,

R. April 5, 1899.

Count Nigra spoke to me yesterday with evident concern of the effect produced on public opinion in Italy by the accounts given of our Agreement with France regarding Africa.

My colleague referred to the understanding which had existed for some years now between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of Italy on the subject of their interests in the Mediterranean, and which was founded on the principle of the maintenance of the *status quo* on the shore of that sea. Later on came the occupation by the French of Tunis, leading to the fortification of Bizerta, which had caused great alarm at Rome, as being a very serious disturbance of the balance in the Mediterranean, to which England and Italy attached so much importance. To the observations addressed on this head to Her Majesty's Government the reply with which Italy had had to content herself was that what had taken place with regard to Tunis must be looked upon as an accomplished fact. Now, however, as far as was known of it, the Anglo-French Agreement concluded the other day provided for a delimitation in favour of France in Africa which would enable her to get at the back of the Hinterland of Tripoli, and to include within her sphere certain valuable oases situated to the south of that territory which had been prospectively held to be within the range of Italian influence.

The Italian Cabinet, said Count Nigra, were now the object of severe attacks for having, it was maintained, shown too much complaisance towards Great Britain and not sufficiently guarded the national interests. Two interpellations on this point had been given notice of in Parliament, and my colleague apprehended that Admiral Canevaro would find it very embarrassing to reply to them. In fact, he much feared that the Government might be defeated and Admiral Canevaro obliged to resign.

I offered no reply to my colleague's observations (which, he explained, were intended for my private information) beyond remarking that Admiral Canevaro had shown such ability in his conduct of Cretan affairs that his retirement would certainly be a matter for regret.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 247.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Rome, April 4, 1899.

F.O. Italy 797.

D. 5.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 54.)

R. 6.50 P.M.

Foreign Minister spoke to me yesterday about the feeling produced in Italy by the publication of the Anglo-French Convention. Notice had been given of numerous interpellations in Chamber which meets about 23rd April, and if Government could not produce some explanations or assurances that would satisfy public opinion it would probably be overthrown.

The terms of the Convention had, he said, been a painful surprise to the Italian Government, who had fully relied on the assurances they had received from Her Majesty's Government in November last.

On my asking to what assurances he referred he produced a Memorandum of an interview with me at which I communicated the substance of Lord Cromer's telegram

No. 307 of last year, stating he had made no allusion to Tripoli or its Hinterland in his conversation with the Italian Consul-General.

The Memorandum added that the Foreign Minister had requested the Ambassador to thank Lord Salisbury for this communication which fully reassured him.

Foreign Minister proceeded to speak of the importance of avoiding a disturbance of the relations of friendship between England and Italy which recent events were likely to cause. He thought that this could only be done if England would assist Italy to obtain what she wanted in China without delay, and if at the same time satisfaction could be given to Italy respecting Tripoli. With regard to latter, he suggested firstly that Italy with the consent of the Powers and the Porte should station a small military force in Tripoli as a joint garrison with the Turkish troops.

I said that there was one fatal objection to this course which was that it would be impossible to induce the Sultan to agree to it. As a second plan he suggested that England, France and Italy might sign a declaration by which the two first-named Powers should bind themselves not to acquire territory or political influence in Tripoli. I asked whether even if England were to agree France would be likely to do so. He replied that he had reason to think so, as the French Minister for Foreign Affairs had recently stated to Tornielli that the French Government would have no objection to the Italians taking Tripoli.

Minister for Foreign Affairs begged me to consider this conversation as informal and confidential and only representing his own views.

No. 248.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Rome, April 10, 1899.

F.O. Italy 797.

D. 8.20 P.M.

Tel. (No. 56.) Confidential.

R. 9.45 P.M.

My telegram No. 54.

Minister for Foreign Affairs informed me to-day that he had spoken to the French Ambassador about the difficulty Italy was placed in by the Anglo-French Convention respecting Tripoli, and had asked if the French Government could give any explanation or assurances of a nature to improve the position of affairs. At a subsequent interview the Ambassador had given long explanations which were not, however, such as Italian Government could accept as satisfactory. Minister for Foreign Affairs had then handed to the Ambassador a draft declaration in the sense reported in the sixth paragraph of my telegram No. 54.

French Ambassador promised to refer it to his Government.

No. 249.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Italy 797.

Rome, D. April 10, 1899.

(No. 74.)

R. April 14, 1899.

My Lord,

With reference to my telegrams Nos. 54 and 56. I have the honour to enclose a sketch which has been handed to me and to the French Ambassador by the Foreign Minister of a proposed Declaration by which France and England would engage themselves to Italy not to acquire any territory or political influence north of the parallel of latitude which touches the southern extremity of the Fezzan, with the further provision that there should be full and entire liberty of commerce for the caravan routes coming from Lake Tchad and the neighbouring regions towards Tripoli.

I have, &c.

CURRIE.

Enclosure in No. 249.

Memorandum communicated by Count Canevaro, April 10, 1899.

Les Gouvernements de la République Française, de Sa Majesté Britannique, et de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie, également soucieux de maintenir, dans l'intérêt de l'équilibre dans la Mer Méditerranée, le principe de l'intégrité de l'Empire Ottoman, ont résolu, en vue de l'accord stipulé le 21 Mars, 1899, entre la France et l'Angleterre, d'arrêter ce qui suit :—

Le Gouvernement de la République Française pour la région à l'est de la Tunisie et de l'Algérie, et le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté Britannique pour la région à l'ouest de l'Égypte, s'engagent, envers le Gouvernement de Sa Majesté le Roi d'Italie, à n'acquérir ultérieurement ni territoire ni influence politique au nord du parallèle effleurant l'extrémité méridionale du Fezzan.

Il y aura pleine et entière liberté de commerce pour les routes caravanières venant du Lac Tchad et des régions avoisinantes et se dirigeant sur la Tripolitaine.

No. 250.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Italy 798.

(No. 86.)

My Lord,

Rome, D. April 24, 1899.

R. April 27, 1899.

The visit of the Channel Squadron to Sardinian waters during the stay of King Humbert has been considered in Italy as a compliment paid to His Majesty, and as a renewed pledge of the friendship of England for Italy.

The meeting of the fleets of the two nations was a fortunate event, following as it did on the exuberant demonstrations of Admiral Fournier and the officers and men under his command at Cagliari.

I am told that the King had been a good deal impressed by the strength of the French fleet, but that the sight of Admiral Rawson's squadron and the testimony borne by the Italian naval officers to its great superiority so far as quality was concerned, removed any exaggerated idea that may have been entertained by His Majesty. His language to me as well as that of all the Italian officers with whom I conversed, expressed unbounded admiration for the British ships and for their personnel.

The patronising tone of the French, although accompanied by great professions of disinterested friendship, did not seem to have left a favourable impression, and great distrust was expressed as to the motives which actuated these advances.

The cordial feeling between English and Italians appeared to be much more genuine, and found expression without any artificial preparation or stimulant.

Admiral Canevaro, whom I have seen since my return, assures me that he has plainly told the French Ambassador that he considers that the attempts to make capital out of the visit of the French fleet have gone too far, and that the French Government will be mistaken if they expect any further results from them beyond the general friendly feeling that Italy entertains for her powerful neighbour. Admiral Canevaro added that he feared that the expectations of a close understanding with Italy that had been aroused in France would cause a renewal of irritation between the two countries when it was found that they could not be realised.

I have, &c.

CURRIE.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Lord Currie.

F.O. Italy 797.

(No. 65.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, April 25, 1899.

The Italian Ambassador called on the 4th instant and spoke of the unfavourable impression which the recent Agreement between Her Majesty's Government and that of France with regard to their respective spheres in Central Africa had produced in Italy.

Sir Thomas Sanderson, who received Baron de Renzis in my absence, called his Excellency's attention to the fact that the paragraph of the Declaration of March 21, which related to the territory north of latitude 15° north, was carefully worded in a negative sense, so that while it placed a limit on the eventual advance of France to the eastward, it did not recognise or purport to pass judgment on any other rights or claims. He further pointed out that the clause in the Declaration which provided for delimitation of the frontier-line by Commissioners did not apply to this portion of the line, and that it had been agreed upon between the French Ambassador and me that there should be no agreement for delimitation, or words implying such agreement for the territory in question.

His Excellency enquired whether something could not be arranged in the way of an exchange of notes, or an assurance of which Admiral Canevaro could make public use, to the effect that Her Majesty's Government maintained their desire to act in accord with Italy for the maintenance of the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, and that they had carefully refrained in the Agreement with France from expressing any opinion with regard to the extent and nature of Turkish claims to the south of Tripoli.

Sir Thomas Sanderson promised to report the matter to me, and on the 10th instant Baron de Renzis again called to receive my reply.

His Excellency was informed that, as had been at once pointed out to him at his former interview, the clause in the Declaration which related to the countries north of latitude 15° was carefully worded in a negative manner and contained no recognition of rights nor any pronouncement on territorial claims. It simply recorded an engagement that the French acquisitions of territory or influence should not go beyond a certain line. Her Majesty's Government had had but one object in view in regard to this clause, namely, that of preventing the extension of French acquisitions eastward of the line designated.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Lord Currie.

F.O. Italy 797.

(No. 78.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, May 13, 1899.

Yesterday the Italian Ambassador asked to see me, and when he came it was apparently for the purpose of asking two questions, which were put by Admiral de Canevaro on leaving office. The Ambassador explained that the Admiral wished to leave nothing with which he had been concerned in a position that should expose his action to any uncertainty or doubt.

The first question he asked me was with respect to the recent agreement between England and France. He wished to know whether we were willing to give any assurance as regards our future action in the Hinterland of Tripoli.

Without enquiring how far we were at present in a position to discuss the future destination of a country or region whose ownership at present was not doubtful, I

pointed out to him that the terms of the Anglo-French Agreement had been so arranged as to convey no statement on our part except one of a negative character. We simply stated that beyond a certain line south of the Tropic of Cancer we would not increase our dominion or influence westward. In this manner we avoided dealing in a positive sense with the future of Tripoli or its Hinterland.

While, however, giving this explanation, I was not in a position to bind Her Majesty's Government by any assurances or engagement with regard to Tripoli.

To declare, as had been, I believe, proposed, that we would under no circumstances occupy any part of Tripoli or the Fezzan, would be a step for which there would be no justification. It would not be a defensible measure on our part to accept an engagement which might be disadvantageous to Great Britain without any countervailing advantage to operate as a consideration or motive for such a pledge, and the engagement which was solicited might have prejudicial results under conceivable circumstances. It might be that the Turkish Empire should fall to pieces at a time when Italy was incapacitated by some accidental circumstance from taking any part in the operations or negotiations by which its division would be determined. It might be that Tripoli or the Fezzan were threatened by some other Power whose claims have not yet been brought forward, and that in the action of Her Majesty's Government would be the sole resource for averting an arrangement which would largely qualify the present balance of Mediterranean power.

It would not be for the peace or advantage of the world, or of England especially, that she should in such a crisis find herself fettered by a promise of inaction undertaken in different circumstances at a previous time. While, therefore, I was ready to give any explanation the Italian Government desired with regard to our present intentions, I could not consent to bind Her Majesty's Government with respect to the future.

Another point on which the Ambassador desired to ask me a question was : he said that there had been rumours of an engagement between England and France on the subject of Harrar, in which Italy could not but feel a lively interest. I replied that the rumours were wholly without foundation. There had been no engagement between France and England about Harrar in recent times.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 253.

Anthopoulos Pasha to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Ambassade Impériale de Turquie,

F.O. Italy 797.

Londres, D. le 17 Mai, 1899.

M. le Marquis,

R. le 18 Mai, 1899.

Vers le commencement du mois d'Avril dernier pendant l'absence de votre Seigneurie, j'ai eu l'occasion de m'entretenir avec Sir Thomas Sanderson d'une communication que j'avais reçue de mon Gouvernement concernant le nouvel arrangement qui venait d'être signé entre la France et Angleterre au sujet du bassin oriental et septentrional du Lac Tchad, comprenant les territoires de Kanem, Ouadaï, Tibesti, et Borkou, qui, disait-on, avaient été reconnus comme acquis à l'influence Française.

Sir Thomas Sanderson n'étant pas à même de me faire connaître la portée et les dispositions précises de la dite Convention relativement aux revendications de mon Gouvernement, a dû me référer à votre Seigneurie en ajoutant en même temps que la délimitation définitive de ces territoires Africains avait été, en vertu de l'Article IV de la Convention, confiée à une Commission qui procéderait ultérieurement à l'accomplissement de cette tâche.

Comme d'autres instructions précises et complémentaires sur cette question viennent de m'être transmises dernièrement, j'ai l'honneur de notifier à votre Seigneurie les réflexions suivantes et la manière de voir de mon Gouvernement au sujet du nouvel arrangement déterminant la zone de l'influence respective dans les Vallées du Nil et du Lac Tchad.

C'est avec étonnement que la Sublime Porte a vu que nonobstant l'engagement contracté, le 5 Août, 1890, entre la France et l'Angleterre, aux termes duquel ces deux Puissances déclaraient vouloir respecter scrupuleusement les droits qui peuvent appartenir à Sa Majesté Impériale le Sultan, mon auguste Maître, dans les régions situées sur la frontière sud des Provinces Tripolitaines de l'Empire Ottoman, le nouvel Accord empiète sur la zone d'influence que le Gouvernement Impérial n'avait pas manqué d'indiquer et préciser, tant à Londres qu'à Paris, dans une note spéciale en date du mois de Novembre 1890. Les raisons qui déterminaient à cette époque le Gouvernement Impérial et qui l'amènent encore aujourd'hui à revendiquer les territoires Africains susmentionnés, étaient et continuent à être la saine interprétation de la doctrine du Hinterland, ainsi que les relations commerciales directes existant entre les possessions Ottomanes de la Tripolitaine et la Vallée du Tchad. D'autres raisons étaient et sont toujours que les routes des caravanes partant de Fezan et de Mourzonk convergent vers ces régions et que la religion Islamique est celle de presque tous les habitants de ces contrées et surtout que leur position géographique est indiscutable, ainsi qu'un simple examen de la carte le prouve surabondamment.

La Sublime Porte se fait donc un devoir de réclamer encore les territoires de Kanem de Onadaï, de Tibesti, et de Borkon, à l'exclusion de toute influence étrangère, laquelle n'a même pas le prétexte de pouvoir se baser sur des actes d'autorité effective, les pays en question n'ayant jusqu'à présent donné lieu à une prise de possession régulière quelconque.

Le Gouvernement Impérial, en prenant connaissance de la Déclaration de l'année 1899, a relevé le fait que l'Angleterre n'a pas hésité à attribuer à la France les contrées dont il s'agit, quoique la première de ces Puissances ne pouvait ignorer les revendications faites à cet égard par la Sublime Porte depuis 1890, d'autant plus que le Cabinet Britannique n'avait alors formulé de réserves que pour le territoire de Bornou, admettant implicitement pour le reste les vues du Gouvernement Impérial.

La Sublime Porte a également observé que la Grande-Bretagne figure dans la Déclaration précitée en son propre nom, sans faire mention des droits de l'Egypte ni des droits de souveraineté de Sa Majesté Impériale de Sultan, droits qu'elle avait toujours reconnus dans ses relations avec différents Représentants étrangers et tout dernièrement encore à l'occasion de l'entente établie avec le Gouvernement Khédivial pour l'administration du Soudan.

En portant à la connaissance de votre Seigneurie ce qui précède conformément aux ordres que je viens de recevoir, je me plais à espérer qu'elle voudra bien me faire parvenir aussitôt que possible la réponse que mon Gouvernement attend à ce sujet.

J'ai, &c.

ANTHOPOULO.

No. 254.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Anthopoulos Pasha.

F.O. Italy 797.

Your Excellency,

Foreign Office, May 26, 1899.

I have had the honour to receive your note of the 17th instant respecting the arrangement recently arrived at between Her Majesty's Government and the Government of the French Republic as to the limits of their spheres of influence in Central Africa.

I have to state to your Excellency, in reply, that the arrangement to which you refer lays down certain limits to the acquisition of territory and political influence by the two Contracting Powers, but does not deal with the question of existing rights. Any questions of this nature should, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, be discussed by the Government of His Majesty the Sultan with the Power which may assume jurisdiction over territories claimed by the Ottoman Porte whenever the occasion may arise.

As regards the rights of Egypt, alluded to in the latter part of your Excellency's note, I have only to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty's Government adhere to the declarations which have already been made by me on this subject.

I have, &c.

SALISBURY.

II.—MUSCAT.

No. 255.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3454.

(No. 58.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 22, 1899.

M. Cambon spoke to me this afternoon with respect to Muscat.⁽¹⁾ He complained very earnestly of the excessive action which he thought the Admiral had pursued towards the Imaum of Muscat; and of the publicity which had been given to the affair, which induced the newspapers to adopt a very disagreeable tone towards the French Government. As he came down he had seen the incident announced upon the hoardings by an advertisement proclaiming "a new check for France."

I replied to him that I had examined into the matter since he spoke to me last time, and I was compelled to adhere to the view which I had laid before him. It seemed to me that the Treaty of 1862, which bound both France and England to respect the independence of the Imaum of Muscat, was seriously threatened if either Power, acting as a Sovereign State, could take from the Imaum a lease of any portion of his territory. If it could be done for a small piece of ground it could be done for a large piece; and after what had taken place in China it was impossible to say that the practical independence of the Imaum would not, in regard to such portions of territory be impaired.

His Excellency declined entirely to admit my interpretation of the Treaty—but setting that question aside, he thought that our view on that subject which was certainly open to discussion need not have been asserted by a threat of bombardment.

I maintained, and I reiterated the opinion, in order that he might be under no doubt with respect to it, that France had so far violated the Treaty, by taking a lease of a portion of the territory of the Imaum. I quite admitted that the affair had not been conducted as quietly as I think it might well have been; and I said that I was very sorry that it had publicly taken the form of an apparent controversy with France. I admitted that in the matter of sentiment he had a grievance, though in the matter of substance our action was entirely right. I also told him that we had had for a great number of years special engagements with the Imaum which involved some payments of money on our side, and a very rigid prohibition of the alienation of his own territory on his side. The existence of these stipulations must be taken into account if the action of our authorities had seemed to be rather summary and

⁽¹⁾ [There had been a preliminary interview on the 15th February, in which M. Cambon declared that the French Government had leased a site for a coaling-station from the Imaum of Muscat.]

they had undoubtedly been actuated by the fear lest the lease which France had obtained should only be a step on the road to the obtaining of a portion of the Imaum's littoral in permanent possession.

His Excellency assured me that any such designs were very far from the contemplation of his Government and he was quite willing to make any declaration which was necessary to place the innocent intentions of his Government beyond doubt. But he asked me whether it would not be possible, after such declarations had been made, to provide in some manner for the establishment of a coaling station, which was really a matter of great necessity to France. He then said that a suggestion which I had made on a previous occasion and repeated again, that it might be taken in the name of a French citizen, was made difficult on the present occasion because the English newspapers had appeared to dictate such a course in a somewhat threatening manner; and he thought that the same end might be arrived at if France formally disclaimed any inference from her possession of a coal dépôt, which could be construed to be derogatory to the independence of the Imaum, or to establish any French right to the littoral.

I said that I was not capable of answering the question directly, because the matter was entirely within the jurisdiction of the India Office; but I would convey his wishes to the Indian Government, and when I knew their answer I would report it to him.

[*ED. NOTE.*—Though the Treaty of 1862 bound Great Britain and France to respect the independence of the Imam of Muscat, Great Britain had on various occasions defended the Sultan against his enemies and had come to exercise a kind of Protectorate. A French attempt to lease a piece of ground for a coaling-station was frustrated by a threat of bombardment by Great Britain.]

No. 256.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3454.

(No. 65.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, February 27, 1899.

The French Ambassador called to-day with reference to the question of a French coaling station at Muscat. His Excellency said that the French Government accepted our reading of the Treaty of 1862, that neither State might accept any cession or lease of Muscat territory. He moreover withdrew the suggestion he had made a week ago that France should keep the grant of Bunder Gisseh under a formal assurance that it involved no territorial right. His Excellency stated, however, that it was necessary for his Government to be able to procure coal in these waters, and they accordingly proposed to establish a coal dépôt on exactly the same terms as our own, that is to say, on sufferance. But he requested that the British Agent at Muscat might be informed that this was being done with the assent of Her Majesty's Government as otherwise the Imaum might object to the arrangement.

I replied that I must in the first instance consult the Government of India, and that I would at once request the Secretary of State for India to communicate with the Viceroy on the subject by telegraph.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3454.

(No. 94.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, March 15, 1899.

After discussing with me to-day the question of our respective spheres of influence in Central Africa as recorded in my despatch No. , M. Cambon went on to refer to the question of Muscat, not so much for the purpose of making any new arrangement, but rather for that of drawing general conclusions as to the present attitude of the two countries towards each other. He represented with great earnestness and at considerable length that it was a position not at all free from danger. He said that he had ascertained by his residence in this country that no one had the slightest desire for war; and returning to France he was convinced, as he had been ever since the commencement of the Fashoda incident, that a similar abhorrence of any war between the two countries existed almost in every part of the French community. He reiterated several times the phrase, "such a war would be absurd." But he said he thought that there was a tone prevalent in England which might have the effect of driving the pacific sentiments of France to despair, and leading Frenchmen to think that there was no hope of tranquil relations with this country. In several incidents which had recently occurred between the two countries, notably in the case of the Fashoda affair and in regard to the proposed extension of the French settlement at Shanghai, and then later again in the matter of Muscat, France was treated, in all expressions that were given of the sentiments of the British Government or officers, in an exceptionally unfavourable and humiliating manner. He said it was a *nuance*, but a *nuance* that might have very calamitous effects.

I did not attempt to deal with the individual proofs of this temper which he adduced, in any of the three cases to which he specially referred, except to refute any statement of fact which seemed to me unfounded or exaggerated. But the argument was of too general a character to be met in conversation, and I contented myself with assuring him that he was mistaken in thinking that we dealt with France on any other principle than that on which we dealt with all other countries, and that any intentional encroachment or aggressiveness of tone was far from our thoughts. In respect to all the three cases the conviction that appeared to be at the bottom of his mind was that it was too absurd to suppose that France intended to take any active policy against England, that precautions or preparations on our part, or the exhibition to our officers of an intention under certain circumstances to resort to material defence, was really an insulting attitude towards France. This, of course, I could not admit, but it would have given to the conversation an irritating turn without any corresponding profit and led me too far to point out in detail how the menacing action of French officers in various parts of the world had forced upon us considerations of self-protection.

S.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3454.

(No. 199A.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 7, 1899.

The French Ambassador spoke to me this afternoon with respect to the question of Muscat. He stated that in the harbour of Muscat itself there was not room enough for a French dépôt of coal, and therefore he proposed to take some other creek, at some distance from Muscat, naming, especially in the first instance, that of Bunder Gisseh, with respect to which the controversy had originally commenced.

I replied that I thought there were many objections to such a course, and that it would give impressions as to the intentions of the French Government which neither they nor we would wish to be entertained. In order, however, to meet the difficulty, the India Office had stated to me that there were three coal-sheds occupied by the British Government, and that they had only need for two. They were prepared to sell the third to the French Government, if they should desire it. The capacity of each coal-shed was about 1,000 tons. M. Cambon promised to refer the question to his Government.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

No. 259.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3459.

(No. 382.) Secret.

Paris, D. August 14, 1899.

My Lord,

R. August 16, 1899.

M. Delcassé passed nearly the whole of the day, after his return from St. Petersburg, at Rambouillet, with the President of the Republic.

As I had not seen him for some time I asked him for an interview, and called by appointment on him yesterday in the forenoon.

It had not been my expectation that M. Delcassé would give me any interesting information about his visit to Russia; but as things turned out that subject was not once mentioned during the hour and a half which I spent in his Excellency's company.

We had hardly exchanged greetings when he began to complain, in a studiously impressive manner, of the impossibility of keeping the relations with England on a friendly footing, saying that the way in which all the justifiable demands of the French Government were rejected in London inspired both himself and M. Cambon with profound discouragement.

I naturally expressed great surprise at such a statement, which I found to be based upon despatches received that morning from M. Cambon respecting the coal dépôt at Muscat, and the extension of the French cemetery at Shanghai.

As at the end of our long conversation (which was at times extremely animated) M. Delcassé begged me to consider it as unofficial, and to confine myself to stating, in regard to those two questions, that he looked upon the communications made by the Foreign Office to M. Cambon as most unsatisfactory. I will not enter into a detailed account of what passed between us. But I am desirous of stating officially that, while M. Delcassé insisted that the conduct of Her Majesty's Government seemed to show a deliberate intention of being unfriendly to France in every possible way, I pointed out to him that the insistence upon such a theory was a most pernicious policy, and one calculated to bring about the very evils which he deprecated.

When his Excellency stated that he began to believe that the politicians who argue that there is nothing to be done with England are right, I said that it is exactly the existence of such people and the influence they exercise which causes so much harm; and I asserted, with warmth, that while I honestly believed that no one in England desired to quarrel with France, I had, after three years' residence here, come to the unfortunate conclusion that many Frenchmen would like to quarrel with England.

M. Delcassé did not refute this assertion.

I went on to say that, as he had raised the question of the "mauvais vouloir" of Her Majesty's Government towards objects sought by France, I must take leave to tell him that we had a numerous list of complaints to make against the "mauvais vouloir" of the Government of the Republic.

On his Excellency's expressing surprise at such a statement, I said that I could send him such a list if he liked; and I reminded him that my notes to the Ministry of

Foreign Affairs rarely produced any other answer than that they were referred to the Minister of the Colonies.

M. Delcassé having observed that no one could be better disposed towards England than M. Decrais, the present Colonial Minister, I readily assented, but added that he had not been more than six weeks in office.

After a warm controversial discussion, which M. Delcassé finally begged me not to treat as official, his Excellency appealed to me to do all in my power to facilitate the maintenance of a good understanding between France and England.

I said that I had always done so; and that, as regards his present complaints, your Lordship and M. Cambon had already been able to settle other difficulties infinitely more serious, and that I saw no reason to doubt that equally satisfactory results would attend your discussion of these.

M. Delcassé eventually recovered his usual geniality, and, as I have said before, requested more than once that our conversation should be regarded as unofficial. I, of course, assented; but, for several reasons, think that its tenour should be placed so far on record as I have now attempted to report it.

For one thing, it took place within forty-eight hours of M. Delcassé's return from Russia; and his Excellency's language may well have been influenced by what he had heard from Count Mouravieff.

For another, the tone of the general press is at this moment most hostile to England. The Transvaal question is the theme of constant notice in the Paris newspapers, and its merits are completely transformed and disguised by French journalists. Then the adulation of Germany continues, and in this connection it is remarkable that the revelations which are being repeated at Rennes as to the proceedings of Colonel Schwartzkoppen and Colonel Panizzardi seem now to arouse no resentment. . . .⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽¹⁾ [Details as to French public opinion.]

No. 260.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir E. Monson.

F.O. France 3454.

(No. 331.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 7, 1899.

M. Cambon came to me yesterday to discuss two points: the addition to her Concession at Shanghae which France has been for some months desirous of obtaining, and the question of the French coal dépôt near Muscat.

With respect to Muscat, he renewed the request that we should consent to the French having a coaling dépôt at Riyam. He said that the place was within three miles of Muscat, and, therefore, within cannon shot, and consequently there was no possibility of any hostile constructions being promoted or established by the French Government at that place. Moreover, he suggested that such a danger might be prevented by an explicit stipulation.

He added that M. Delcassé could not avail himself without Parliamentary danger of the proposal which we had made, that the French Government should accept one of the English coal bunks close to Muscat for the purpose of storing their coal. Such an arrangement would be repulsive to national feeling.

In reply, I told him I feared there was little chance of our objection to Riyam being modified. I did not think that though it was only three miles from the town of Muscat, the lie of the country would justify his observation that it lay within cannon shot. It was undoubtedly a strategic position of some importance, and as France,

under the Treaty of 1862, had no right to any privilege to which England had not a right also to possess, we maintained that the Sultan of Muscat ought not to be advised to establish the French coaling-station in a position strategically very much more advantageous than that of the English.

His Excellency dwelt much upon the Parliamentary difficulties of adopting the course which I had recommended. On the other hand, I pointed out to him that in the early stages of this affair, which I quite admitted had not been very auspiciously conducted in its initial steps, the Indian Government had, with the sanction of the Government at home, clearly laid it down that any concession of a superior position in Muscat to that which was occupied by the British Government, would be, in the judgment of the British Government, not consonant to the Treaty of 1862.

It would be impossible, now that that view had been so clearly laid down and become generally known, for the Indian Government to accept a less advantageous solution, without exposing itself to much reproach on the part of the leaders of native opinion both on the Persian Gulf and in India. Without wishing to exaggerate the results which either alternative of action would bring with it, it appeared to me that the objections present to the mind of the Government of India were more important in their character than those which were apprehended by M. Delcassé. All that he had to fear was an adverse opinion in the Chamber. If the Indian Government relinquished a right which they had so strongly asserted, upon a matter which lay within the sphere hitherto regarded as their own, they would lose the confidence of Chiefs and populations whose feelings towards the British rule were not a matter of insignificant importance.

His Excellency expressed, in very strong language, his regret that we were not able to accede to the wishes of France in this matter.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

[*ED. NOTE.*—On the 25th April, 1900, M. Cambon announced that M. Delcassé was disposed to accept the British proposal that the two countries should divide the site where the British coal-sheds were situated.

Agreements between the United Kingdom and France referring to Arbitration the question of the grant of the French Flag to Muscat dhows were signed at London, 13 October, 1904, and 13 January, 1905, and ratifications were exchanged on 18 January, 1905, *Accounts and Papers*, 1905 (*Cd.* 2380), CIII, 235.]

CHAPTER VI.

THE HAGUE PEACE CONFERENCE.

I.—THE PRELIMINARIES.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The correspondence between Russia and Great Britain, relating to the summoning of the Peace Conference (August–October 1898), does not appear in *B.F.S.P.*, but is published in Russia, No. 1 of 1899, *P.P. Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9090), CX, p. 85.

The invitation is contained in a despatch of Sir C. Scott of the 25th August, enclosing a memorandum of Count Muravieff.

The provisional reply of Mr. Balfour of the 25th August to Sir C. Scott, No. 293, is printed there. To this should be added the following.]

No. 261.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir C. Scott.

F.O. Russia 1558.

Foreign Office, August 30, 1898.

Tel. Private and Secret.

D. 2.55 P.M.

Do you suppose Russian Government have thought out their own plan and have any definite scheme to lay before a Congress? Is the Congress to be allowed at the instance of one or of a majority of the Powers to discuss existing causes which might lead to hostilities, *e.g.*, Alsace-Lorraine, Constantinople, Afghanistan, Egypt? Are armaments to be fixed according to area, population, or wealth, or all three? Is the defensibility of a country or the reverse to be taken into account and if so who is to be the judge of it? If any country refuses to disarm, are the other countries to go to war with her in the interests of peace? These are not questions which you should press on Count Mouravieff without further instruction, but if informally any light could be thrown on them it would be desirable.

A. J. B[ALFOUR].

No. 262.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3396.

Paris, D. September 1, 1898.

(No. 431.)

R. September 3, 1898.

My Lord,

I called on M. Delcassé on the 29th ultimo and endeavoured to find out how far the French Government had been consulted by that of the Emperor Nicholas before the determination of the latter to issue the note of the 24th August.

I found it impossible to get a direct answer from his Excellency; but his language certainly implied that he had had no earlier knowledge of the intention of the Emperor than any other Foreign Governments. I cannot, however, feel sure that I am correct in this surmise, as it seems almost incredible that a step of such a nature should have been taken at St. Petersburg without preliminary consultation with the professed ally at Paris.

M. Delcassé had, in fact, been away in the country for eight or nine days, and consequently had had no opportunity of seeing the President of the Republic nor any of his colleagues in the interval between the 24th and the publication of the note. He returned to Paris on the 27th, and spent a few hours at Havre with M. Faure on the 28th, the day on which the text of the note was printed by the evening papers in Paris. He declared to me that he did not know what day the French Ambassador at St. Petersburg had received it.

As soon as the Chambers meet his Excellency will be questioned on this subject,

which, of course, is very interesting to the French public, which does not like to think that the Emperor Nicholas did not pay his ally the compliment of a previous consultation; especially as it is generally believed that Berlin was treated in this respect with more confidence than Paris.

Whatever the truth may be M. Delcassé was uncommunicative, both on the foregoing point and on the impression made on the French Government. He confined himself to platitudes in regard to the main question; but said very naturally that until it had been discussed in the Cabinet he could pronounce no opinion upon it.

He was ready enough, however, to refer to the state of the relations between England and Russia; saying that he could see no reason why all the supposed divergent interests should not be reconciled, just as he thought it possible that every difficulty between England and France could by patience, and by a conciliatory spirit, be peaceably solved. He had always, he stated, regarded as eminently desirable a cordial understanding between England, France, and Russia; and begged me to assure your Lordship that he is most anxious to co-operate "as far as his feeble means could enable him" in soothing the way both at St. Petersburg and Paris for the attainment of this object.

It did not for the moment appear to me advisable to enter into the subject of our relations with Russia; all the more that up till now M. Delcassé has never shown any disposition to indulge in confidences. I confined myself, therefore, to stating that I was certain that Her Majesty's Government would appreciate his friendly assurances.

The effect produced upon public opinion in France by the unexpected manifesto of the Emperor Nicholas can only be described as bewilderment. Perhaps it may be the same in other countries, but it is very intelligible that the *cui bono* should be the general comment in the case of an ally who has hitherto certainly had no special reason to think that the alliance has been profitable to herself, and who can hardly be blind to the consideration that her own object in concluding it is eminently imperilled by the premature philanthropy of the other party to the contract.

No one throws any doubt upon the sincerity of the intention of the Emperor Nicholas; and, discontented as the French are, their resentment does not yet go so far as to induce them to express suspicion of His Imperial Majesty's Councillors. But it is patent to everyone that, however disinterested the Emperor may believe himself to be, he could not have chosen a moment for this step more opportune for the interests of Russia herself. The French are not so dull-witted as not to see this well enough, and their perception of it does not diminish their dissatisfaction.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 263.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1439.

(No. 248.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. September 2, 1898.

R. September 5, 1898.

In the interview which I had with M. de Bülow this morning the conversation turned on the Circular issued by order of the Emperor of Russia in regard to the excessive armaments of the European Powers, and I observed that your Lordship had informed me that Count Hatzfeldt had notified to you that the acceptance by the German Government in principle of the proposal was in no way excluded.

M. de Bülow replied that the German Government had been anxious to inform Her Majesty's Government of the view they took of the Emperor of Russia's proposal. It was one which did great honour to His Majesty, and was a generous action actuated by a sincere desire for the maintenance of peace. The German Government had at

once accepted it in principle, and were now waiting for a further communication from the Russian Government as to the basis of discussion.

M. de Bülow could not but be alive to the great difficulties which have to be encountered. In his opinion, the only basis of discussion would be the maintenance of the *status quo*, but would this suit the other Powers, and more especially France? He had seen it stated in the newspapers that France would seek an opportunity for settling the Egyptian question, and it had been said that the Balkan States would strive to reopen the question of Bosnia and Herzegovina.

I added that the question of Alsace and Lorraine had also been mentioned in the papers, to which his Excellency replied that the German Government could not possibly consent to the reopening of questions which had been definitely settled by Treaty.

His Excellency also told me confidentially that he had no doubt that the idea originated with the Emperor of Russia himself. It had, however, he believed, been supported by M. Witte,⁽¹⁾ who was anxious to obtain a further loan, and who had been given to understand that no more money would be forthcoming from the French market. He had, therefore, turned his attention to England and Germany, and believed that his best chance of success was to proclaim a pacific policy. Count Mouravieff's share in the matter was probably to be explained by his desire for notoriety.

So far as he was aware, no answer had yet been returned by the French Government, who no doubt found themselves in a position of considerable embarrassment.⁽²⁾

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

(1) [For other evidence as to the interested designs of M. Witte v. below p. 231*n* and collection of authorities in *G.P.* XV, 144, note 164-5, 183-4.]

(2) [A similar communication was made by Herr von Bülow to Count Hatzfeldt in London, 26th August, 1898, *G.P.* XV, 145-7.]

No. 264.

Sir C. Scott to Mr. Balfour.

F.O. Russia 1559.

St. Petersburg, September 3, 1898.

Tel. (No.124.)

D. 7·20 P.M.

Your telegram No. 240.

Count Mouravieff much appreciates your expression of sympathy in object of Emperor's note.

He desires it to be clearly understood that it is not proposed to lay any definite scheme before the Conference, but to propose as preliminary conditions that its character shall be essentially non-political, and all political subjects such as general disarmament, past or existing causes tending to hostilities, and other contentious matter be from the outset rigidly excluded from the scope of discussion.

That its proceedings should not be in secret but of the character of an international exchange of views on the important considerations raised by Emperor's circular, and the discussion carried on under the so to speak eyes and within hearing of the public.

Further, that no Power should in any way be committed by fact of accepting or taking part in conference.

No special preference for St. Petersburg as place of meeting, and mode of proceeding probably settled after consulting and receiving suggestions from other Governments.

He said for instance it might be found desirable to appoint a preliminary commission of experts military, financial and commercial to formulate subjects for discussion.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1274.

(No. 255.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. September 8, 1898.

My Lord,

R. September 12, 1898.

I asked Count Goluchowski yesterday what he thought of the Russian disarmament proposals.

His Excellency said that here, as he believed elsewhere, they had come as a complete surprise. The preliminary reply he had made to them was to the effect that the Imperial Government thoroughly appreciated and sympathised with the lofty spirit in which these overtures had been conceived and would readily contribute to their realisation, but that they would be glad to be informed as to the bases which it was intended should serve for the proposed Conference.

His Excellency then went on to say that he gathered from the reports which he had subsequently received from St. Petersburg that it was contemplated there that the Ministers of War and Marine of the several Powers represented at the Conference should attend it, in addition to whatever other Diplomatic representatives might be appointed. It was further explained that there would be no proposal for immediate disarmament, and that no discussion was intended of past, present or future questions.

My interview with Count Goluchowski being of a somewhat hurried character, I had no opportunity of talking over with him what questions would remain to be discussed after the sweeping exceptions he had mentioned. It was evident, however, that his Excellency was sceptical as to the practical value of the laudable scheme so abruptly laid before the world by Russia, and that he scarcely looked upon the meeting of the Conference as being within measurable distance. Count Mouravieff himself, he observed, was going on leave of absence and was apparently prepared to allow ample time for meditation of the project which he had put forward.

In reply to an observation I made that the generous personal initiative of the Emperor himself was clearly visible in this unexpected departure, Count Goluchowski said that this was certainly the case, but that he had little doubt that Count Mouravieff had not been sorry to attach his own name to so seductive a programme. On my referring to the unpleasant impression said to have been caused at Paris by the Russian Circular, his Excellency confirmed the fact that the French Government had been most disagreeably surprised by it.

I learn from a credible source that some annoyance was felt at the Imperial Foreign Office at no warning having reached it of the impending step from the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador at St. Petersburg. It is indeed thought that this *may* contribute to hasten the resignation which Prince Liechtenstein is understood to have meditated for some time past on purely private grounds.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

(Private.)

(Extract.)

September 8, 1898.

The principal topic here at present is the Emperor Nicholas' proposal for disarmament. It is difficult to say what the Japanese Government think of it. My impression is that Count Okuma will be very much guided by the action of England and America, with whom he is anxious to remain on good terms. Russia is very much distrusted. My French colleague [M. Harmand], who is extremely Anglophobe, on seeing the telegram, went off at once to the Belgian, and gave it as his opinion that there

would be no disarmament, but that the result of the Conference would be an alliance of the Continental Powers against England.

The Belgian [Baron d'Aethan], on the other hand, inferred that there was an end of the Franco-Russian Alliance, and the next thing would be a revival of the *entente cordiale* between England and France. I rather demurred to this.⁽¹⁾

(¹) Cf. following extract also from the private letters of Sir E. Satow :—

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

October 6, 1898.

(Extract.)

The Russian proposal for disarmament has quite ceased to occupy the public mind here. I find that Rosen did not deliver a note about it to the Japanese Government. He merely sent off a secretary in haste to Tokyo from the hot baths where he was staying, to enquire what they had heard. My French colleague telegraphed to Paris for information to give to the Japanese and received the following answer :—

“ We do not understand your emotion. If the Japanese Government wish to know anything they should apply to the Russian Minister.”

No. 267.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1274.

(No. 261.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. September 14, 1898.

My Lord,

R. September 17, 1898.

Since the date of my despatch No. 255, Confidential, of the 8th instant, I have had opportunities of talking over the Russian Disarmament Circular with the German and Italian Ambassadors, who have now returned to town.

The opinions of my two colleagues on this subject seem to me entitled to greater weight, from their both having recently been in direct intercourse with their respective chiefs; Count Nigra having met Admiral Canevaro on the Lake of Lucerne, and the German Ambassador having been for some time on the Semmering in company with M. de Bülow.

I find that both my colleagues consider that a reasonable basis for a Conference is afforded by the Russian proposals as resumed in the four points :—

1. That the question of (immediate) disarmament should remain untouched.
2. That a simple exchange of ideas should take place, in no way binding the Powers.
3. That all political questions, past, present, or future, should be excepted from discussion.
4. That the object of the Conference should be an exchange of views on economic and military questions.

With so carefully-guarded a programme as the above, my colleagues hold that there could scarcely be any objection to the Conference being held. But whether, beyond the public manifestation of the earnest desire universally felt for a check to inordinate armaments, it would yield serious results in the direction of permanent peace, they consider very doubtful.

Count Eulenburg, speaking of course quite confidentially, dwelt on the curiously impulsive and somewhat crude character of the original Circular, as showing it to be the handiwork of the Emperor himself, and not the product of his highly trained Chancery. As regards the period of its issue he did not think that it had been timed so as to cause embarrassment in certain quarters, as for instance to ourselves, and believed it to have been the emanation of personal Imperial ideas, without any kind of *arrière-pensée* or recondite motive. He derived, however, satisfaction—as is but natural—from the evidence it contained that it had been conceived without any regard to the feelings and calculations of Russia's would-be most intimate ally, and had

cruelly dispelled what illusions may have been nourished in France as to the practical value of a much-vaunted understanding.

Those who were cognisant of the real extent of that understanding had nothing new to learn from the drift of the Russian manifesto in favour of peace, but it must have come as a wholesome damper to the great mass of Frenchmen who, having signed and outwardly accepted the stipulations of the Treaty of Frankfort, had made it a habit persistently to disavow them in the most cynical way.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 268.

Mr. Macdonald to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Servia 123.

(No. 95.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Belgrade, D. September 15, 1898.

R. September 19, 1898.

In an interview which I had with M. Vladan Georgevitch a fortnight ago, I found him more anxious to take opinions concerning Count Mouravieff's Circular respecting a reduction of armaments than to express his own.

In answer to a question which I put to him at to-day's reception, his Excellency told me that the Servian Government had not yet returned an answer to the Circular, and that there is no pressing reason for a small country like this to do so until all the Great Powers have spoken. The absence of King Alexander also furnishes a sufficient excuse for delay.

Meanwhile the "Odjek" newspaper, which is the mouthpiece of the Radical majority in the country, the "Male Novina" and the "Savet," both of which latter papers are generally credited with a semi-official character, have discussed the Russian proposal from the point of view of Servian interests. Their opinions may be crystallised in M. Gjajas' very frank words to me: "The idea of a disarmament does not please our people in any way. The Servian race is split up under seven or eight different foreign Governments, and we cannot be satisfied so long as this state of things lasts. We live in the hope of getting something for ourselves out of the general conflagration, whenever it takes place."⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

RANALD D. G. MACDONALD.

⁽¹⁾ [The Turkish Government expressed the view to the Germans that Prince Nicholas was arming and provoking unrest in Bulgaria and Montenegro, and that disarmament was not practical for Turkey, *G.P.*, XV, the 4th September, 1898, report of Marschall.]

No. 269.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir C. Scott.

F.O. Russia 1551.

(No. 219.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, October 24, 1898.

Her Majesty's Government have given their careful consideration to the Memorandum which was placed in your hands on the 24th August last by the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, containing a proposal of His Majesty the Emperor of Russia for the meeting of a Conference to discuss the most effective methods of securing the continuance of general peace, and of putting some limit on the constant increase of armaments.

Your Excellency was instructed at the time by Mr. Balfour, in my absence from England, to explain the reasons which would cause some delay before a formal reply could be returned to this important communication, and, in the meanwhile, to assure the Russian Government of the cordial sympathy of Her Majesty's Government with the objects and intentions of His Imperial Majesty. That this sympathy is not confined to the Government, but is equally shared by popular opinion in this country, has been strikingly manifested since the Emperor's proposal has been made generally known, by the very numerous Resolutions passed by public meetings and Societies in the United Kingdom. There are, indeed, few nations, if any, which, both on grounds of feeling and interest, are more concerned in the maintenance of general peace than is Great Britain.

The statements which constitute the grounds of the Emperor's proposal are but too well justified. It is unfortunately true that while the desire for the maintenance of peace is generally professed, and while, in fact, serious and successful efforts have on more than one recent occasion been made with that object by the Great Powers, there has been a constant tendency on the part of almost every nation to increase its armed force, and to add to an already vast expenditure on the appliances of war. The perfection of the instruments thus brought into use, their extreme costliness, and the horrible carnage and destruction which would ensue from their employment on a large scale, have acted no doubt as a serious deterrent from war. But the burdens imposed by this process on the populations affected must, if prolonged, produce a feeling of unrest and discontent menacing both to internal and external tranquillity.

Her Majesty's Government will gladly co-operate in the proposed effort to provide a remedy for this evil; and if, in any degree, it succeeds, they feel that the Sovereign to whose suggestion it is due will have richly earned the gratitude of the world at large.

Your Excellency is therefore authorised to assure Count Mouravieff that the Emperor's proposal is willingly accepted by Her Majesty's Government, and that the Queen will have pleasure in delegating a Representative to take part in the Conference whenever an invitation is received. Her Majesty's Government hope that the invitation may be accompanied by some indication of the special points to which the attention of the Conference is to be directed as a guide for the selection of the British Representative, and of the assistants by whom he should be accompanied.

You will read this despatch to the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and leave him a copy of it.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

[The formal official note of acceptance by Lord Salisbury, despatched to Sir C. Scott on the 24th October, 1898, is printed in *Accounts and Papers*, 1899, (C. 9090), CX, pp. 89-90.]

No. 270.

Sir E. Satow to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Japan 499.

(No. 166.)

My Lord,

Tokyo, D. November 1, 1898.

R. December 5, 1898.

With reference to the conference proposed by the Emperor of Russia for ensuring the peace of the world and limiting the development of armaments, I have the honour to enclose a *précis* of the remarks made by the Japanese Minister President at a public dinner on the 19th October.

Count Okuma stated that Great Britain, France and Austria regarded the Emperor as being actuated by financial difficulties, accentuated by the recent famine. His own belief was that the proposal emanated from the Emperor's good heart and was the result of the peaceful policy of the Emperor Alexander III.

He then went on to speak of the strain placed on the resources of Japan by her present expenditure on army and navy. It had led to the downfall of the previous Cabinet, and might cause that of which he was himself a member. There was reason therefore to welcome the proposal. If Japan joined in working in the cause of peace the aspirations of the Emperor of Russia would probably be realised, and the solution of the Chinese question rendered easy.

But if the scheme miscarried, no harm would have been done. It would simply mean war. In that case what had Japan to fear? But personally he was for peace, and so was the Emperor of Japan. If, therefore, east and west worked in unison he did not see why the desired result should not be obtained. . . . [Rest deals with internal affairs of Japan.]

I have, &c.

ERNEST SATOW.

No. 271.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1449.

(No. 340.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. December 22, 1898.

R. December 26, 1898.

In the interview which I had with the Emperor on the 19th instant, the conversation turned upon the peace proposals of the Emperor of Russia.

The proposal, His Majesty said, no doubt originated with the Emperor himself, who had been reading a book by a Warsaw banker named Bloch, which was ably written in a philanthropic and humanitarian sense, and which had strongly impressed upon His Majesty the necessity for him to do something to mitigate the horrors of war, and to prevent the wholesale destruction of human life. The proposal was warmly adopted both by Count Mouravieff and M. de Witte. The vanity of the former was tickled by the idea of presiding over a Conference, and thus having the opportunity of bringing himself into prominence and getting himself talked about, a consideration which influenced most of his actions, and the latter was in serious want of money, and thought that the proclamation of a pacific policy would open for him the money markets of London and Berlin, which had now become a matter of vital necessity, since he had lost all hope of receiving further supplies from France.

It had become a matter of great interest to the German Government to ascertain the nature of the programme which the Russian Government would propose, and His Majesty had instructed his Ambassador at St. Petersburg to make enquiries on the subject. Prince Radolin had reported that Count Mouravieff proposed not so much a Diplomatic Conference as a meeting of experts to prevent any further inventions which would increase the destructiveness of modern weapons. Prince Radolin very properly asked whether Count Mouravieff seriously proposed that the scientific and learned men of the world should be prevented from continuing their studies and making further discoveries. Count Mouravieff replied that such was by no means his intention, but that he thought that some steps should be taken, by an agreement among the Powers, to prevent the application to weapons of warfare of any new invention which might increase their destructiveness. Prince Radolin, having reported this conversation, was instructed that if His Majesty had to appoint an expert, the one he would select would be his Minister of War.

His Majesty went on to say that it was easy to see that this proposal originated with M. de Witte. At present Russia had no inventors or manufacturers, and was obliged to purchase all her arms and powder abroad. This constituted a heavy drain on the resources of the country, and it was only natural that the Minister of Finance should wish that the vast sums which now went to enrich the foreigners should be spent at home.

His Majesty mentioned in connection with this subject that Messrs. Krupp had been invited to tender for the construction of a new gun for the Russian artillery, a proof that the present gun was not considered satisfactory, and His Majesty had also received information that the experiments made with the new field gun adopted by the French army had been very disappointing. His Majesty added, with some satisfaction, that there could be no doubt that the German gun was now the best in existence.⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

⁽¹⁾ [The Kaiser annotated the original summons with phrases like "Utopia," *G.P.*, XV, 145, but on the 29th August, *ib.* 151-2, he addressed a warm telegram on the subject to the Czar. The statement made by the Kaiser, W. T. Stead and others, that the Kaiser planned a similar peace conference in the early nineties is stated by the editors of *G.P.*, XV, 141-n, to be unsupported by any documents they have found at Berlin.]

[*ED. NOTE.*—Much discussion arose about whether the Pope should be invited or not, in which England played no obtrusive part, *G.P.*, XV, 176-7, 187-n. Similar questions were raised with reference to the Transvaal Republic by Holland. In the end, neither was invited.]

II.—THE CONFERENCE.

[*ED. NOTE.*—The various questions discussed at the Conference—disarmament, capture of private property at sea, and arbitration—are discussed at full length in *G.P.*, XV, 197-346.

The attitude of Italy and of Austria-Hungary towards arbitration and of Great Britain towards armaments are indicated in the following documents.]

No. 272.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. General 1702.

(No. 103.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. April 27, 1899.

R. May 1, 1899.

During a conversation which I had yesterday with Count Nigra, his Excellency spoke in a somewhat despondent tone about his approaching Mission to the Hague as the Italian Representative at the Peace Conference.

He did not conceal from himself that there was but little probability of the deliberations which would take place leading to any practical result. As to anything being decided upon in respect to the reduction of armaments he regarded it as quite out of the question, and the very utmost he hoped that might be obtained would be the possible diminution of the horrors of warfare through some agreement as to the prohibition of the use of some of the more destructive engines of war, as, for instance, the employment of submarine boats, explosives, and such like.

Notwithstanding these anticipations, Count Nigra went on, however, to say that whatever the end of the Conference might be, he could not help looking upon the fact that the Conference had been summoned on the Czar's personal initiative, and that the invitation had been responded to by all the Powers as a very positive gain in the interests of peace. This, he considered, was in itself significant, but was rendered still more so when it was remembered that the Emperor of Russia had taken his decision without previous consultation with France, thus very forcibly showing that the alliance between the two countries was by no means so close as had been generally supposed.

His Excellency then went on to relate to me that, as a matter of fact, the first intimation which the French Government had obtained of the Russian disarmament proposal last summer was through a communication which he himself had made to the French Ambassador here, and that, upon M. de Reverseaux telegraphing the news to Paris, the French Government had replied that it could not be true as M. de Montebello had sent no information on the subject from St. Petersburg.

Count Nigra informed me that he would probably leave Vienna in a few days for Rome in order to confer with his Government before proceeding to the Hague.

I have, &c.

RALPH MILBANKE.

No. 273.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. General 1702.

(No. 118.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. May 12, 1899.

My Lord,

R. May 15, 1899.

I had some conversation yesterday with Count Welsersheimb, who . . . is about to proceed to the Hague as Representative of Austria-Hungary at the Peace Conference. . . .

Then there was the question of arbitration, upon which Count Welsersheimb laid considerable stress. . . .

His Excellency then went on to allude to the idea which had prevailed in certain quarters that the disarmament proposal was merely a feint on the part of Russia in order to gain a period of general peace, during which she might quietly complete her military and naval organisation, but however natural such suspicion might be, and particularly so, he significantly added, in regard to any proposal which emanated from St. Petersburg, he hardly thought that it was justified on the present occasion. There could be no doubt of the Emperor Nicholas' honest intentions, and he really believed now that the Russian Government were equally anxious to make the coming Conference a reality. It was, in fact, on the goodwill which was apparently being shown now by all the Powers concerned, not excluding France, that he based his principal hope that the coming deliberations at the Hague might still be productive of some definite results.

I have, &c.

RALPH MILBANKE.

No. 274.

*Extract of Letter from Admiralty to Foreign Office.**

F.O. General 1702.

Admiralty, May 16, 1899.

As regards the proposals to limit the Naval forces their Lordships are of opinion that it will be found to be quite impracticable to come to any agreement as to the meaning of the term "effectifs actuels," or to ensure that the terms of any agreement arrived at would be carried out. . . .

With reference to the proposal to restrict improvements in weapons . . . any such restriction would favour the interests of savage nations, and be against those of the more highly civilised. It would be a retrograde step. . . .

It is further observed that the proposal to limit the use of new explosives is believed to be impracticable unless the several Powers are prepared to make known

* Copy sent to Sir J. Pauncefote, the 18th May, 1899.

to the Conference the nature and composition of those which they now use and which are at present secret. Their Lordships believe that none of the Great Powers would be prepared to do this.

As to the various proposals to regulate the conduct of war . . . their Lordships are averse to binding this country in this manner, as such an arrangement would be almost certain to lead to mutual recriminations.

No. 275.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir J. Pauncefote.

F.O. General 1694.

(No. 1.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 16, 1899.

I have the honour to inform your Excellency that Her Majesty has been graciously pleased to appoint you, in conjunction with Sir Henry Howard, Her Majesty's Minister at The Hague, to be one of the Plenipotentiaries to represent this country at the Conference on Armaments which is to meet at The Hague on the 18th of this month. Vice-Admiral Sir J. Fisher, K.C.B., and Major-General Sir J. Ardagh, K.C.I.E., C.B., have been appointed by Her Majesty to assist you and Sir H. Howard in the discussion of the naval and military questions which will come before the Conference.

The original proposal for this Conference came, as your Excellency is aware, from the Emperor of Russia, and was placed before all the Powers who have Representatives at the Court of St. Petersburg in a Memorandum dated the 12th (24th) August last. Her Majesty's Government cordially accepted the invitation.

On the 11th January the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs addressed to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg and to the other Representatives a second note enumerating in a general manner the subjects which might be discussed by the Conference, and suggesting that questions concerning the political relations between States, the order of things established by Treaties, and generally all questions not directly included in the Programme of the Conference should be excluded from its deliberations.

Her Majesty's Government willingly accepted this latter proviso. They agreed to the general definition of the objects of the Conference given in Count Mouravieff's note, namely, the diminution of armaments by land and sea, and the prevention of armed conflicts by pacific diplomatic procedure.

With regard to the eight points enumerated by his Excellency as proper subjects for discussion by the Conference, Her Majesty's Government thought it best to abstain from expressing any definite opinion beyond repeating their earnest desire to promote, by all possible means, the principle of recourse to mediation and arbitration for the prevention of war which formed the eighth and last point of Count Mouravieff's Programme.

In a further despatch to Her Majesty's Ambassador at St. Petersburg, which your Excellency will find in the correspondence furnished to you, I made some observations of a preliminary character on those points of the Programme which concerned the question of disarmament, and mentioned various particulars in regard to which it seemed to me indispensable that some conclusion should be arrived at before the discussion of those points in detail could be usefully pursued. We have no means of judging whether this portion of the Programme will retain at the Conference the position of primary importance which at first seemed to be assigned to it. Until, therefore, the Conference has met and the order of discussion has been in some degree settled, it seems scarcely possible to give you and Sir H. Howard any more detailed instructions. I am forwarding to your Excellency memoranda

which have been received from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty and from the Secretary of State for War, containing information and suggestions on these topics, which will be of assistance to you and to the Military and Naval Delegates, on whom the task of debating them will largely rest.

With regard to the question of making the employment of arbitration or mediation more general and effective, for the settlement of international disputes, it is unnecessary for me to say that it is a matter to which Her Majesty's Government attach the highest importance, and which they are desirous of furthering by every means in their power. During the negotiations which your Excellency has conducted at Washington for the conclusion of a Treaty of General Arbitration between this country and the United States, you were placed in full possession of the views of Her Majesty's Government on the subject. Those views have further received practical application in the conclusion of a Treaty, also negotiated by your Excellency, for the submission to arbitration of the disputed questions of frontier between British Guiana and Venezuela. The success with which you conducted both these negotiations induces Her Majesty's Government to feel sanguine that on the present occasion your efforts may equally be productive of good result.

I request that your Excellency will keep me constantly informed of the proceedings of the Conference, which Her Majesty's Government will watch with much interest.

I am, &c.
SALISBURY.

No. 276.

War Office to Foreign Office.

F.O. General 1702.

War Office, D. May 17, 1899.

Sir,

R. May 24, 1899.

. . . . I am to enclose a Memorandum the conclusions of which have Lord Lansdowne's entire approval.

I am, &c.
R. H. KNOX.

Enclosure in No. 276.

Memorandum.

. . . . In conclusion the following summary is submitted of the views which are contained in the Memorandum on the subject of the Russian Circular:—

Article 1.—It is not desirable that any undertaking should be given restricting the numbers and the cost of Her Majesty's military forces.

Articles 2 and 3.—It is not desirable to agree to any restrictions upon the employment of further developments in destructive agencies, whether in small arms, cannon, or explosives, or the methods of employing them.

Article 7.—It is not desirable to assent to an international code on the laws and customs of war; but an undertaking may be given that Her Majesty's Government will consider the question of issuing instructions on these subjects for the general guidance of British forces.

No. 277.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir J. Pauncefote.

F.O. General 1694.

(No. 6.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, May 31, 1899.

. . . . (1) Her Majesty's Government entirely approve the course which your Excellency has taken on the occasion. . . . The scheme which you have framed for the constitution of the Tribunal⁽²⁾ appears to them to be judicious, and to have been skilfully put forward.

As a possible modification of one portion of that scheme I would suggest that instead of leaving the choice of arbitrators in each case to the litigant Governments, the selection of three or five arbitrators might be made by a vote of the whole college from among its members on each occasion, and that after the selection had been made, it should be open to either of the litigants to request a fresh selection, or to decline the arbitration. But the consent of the litigants once given would be final⁽³⁾

S.

(1) [Details as to proceedings of Conference.]

(2) [Sir J. Pauncefote's project for a permanent tribunal (published in Press of the 2nd June), which he was prepared to place before the Commission, in preference to an alternative but vague Russian Scheme (also published in Press).]

(3) [This modification was dropped in despatch No. 10 of the 3rd June.]

No. 278.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir J. Pauncefote.

F.O. General 1702.

(No. 15.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, June 9, 1899.

I have received your Excellency's despatch No. 14, Confidential, of the 5th instant reporting that the project which you laid before the Third Commission of the Conference for the establishment of a permanent international tribunal has met with general concurrence and will be taken as the basis of deliberation

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 279.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir H. Rumbold.

F.O. 120/749 (Austria).

Tel. (No. 11.) Secret.

Foreign Office, June 12, 1899.

Sir Julian Pauncefote has grounds for believing that the German Emperor is trying to induce the Foreign Office at the Court to which you are accredited to join him in resisting the efforts which Great Britain, supported by France and Russia, is making to establish a permanent international Arbitration Tribunal. It would be a great misfortune if his combination were to succeed. Pray exert all the influence you can over the Minister for Foreign Affairs [Count Goluchowski] to prevent the Government to which you are accredited from supporting him.

[ED. NOTE.—For German relations with Count Goluchowski, Austro-Hungarian Minister for Foreign Affairs, see *G.P.*, XV, 256-8; and for interview of Count Hatzfeldt with Lord Salisbury (the 14th June), *ib.* 278-9.]

No. 280.

Sir G. Bonham to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Rome, June 13, 1899.

F.O. Italy 802.

D. 8.10 P.M.

Tel. (No. 89.) Secret.

R. 8.30 P.M.

Your Lordship's telegram No. 112, Secret.

Minister for Foreign Affairs, on my alluding to proposal made at the Hague for a permanent International Arbitration Tribunal, told me in the strictest confidence that his original instructions to Italian Representatives were to support such a proposal, subject to two conditions: the composition of Tribunal, that is, the Powers composing Tribunal; recourse to it being optional and not obligatory.

On learning that German Government objected, he made confidential representations at Berlin, which were, however, unsuccessful.⁽¹⁾

On my suggesting that further representation might be made, he answered that he had already done what he could; at the same time he did not look upon the door as entirely closed in this direction, and that Italy would not be the Power to prevent the adoption of the proposal.

His Excellency's tone, however, was despondent when he spoke of the necessity of complete unanimity.

⁽¹⁾ [For Italian enquiry of the 9th June and German refusal of the 10th June, *r. G.P.*, XV. 266-8, 273-4.]

No. 281.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. 120/750 (Austria).

(No. 142.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. June 13, 1899.

My Lord,

R. June 16, 1899.

I called upon Count Goluchowski by appointment this afternoon, and spoke to him on the subject referred to in your Lordship's telegram No. 11, marked Secret, of yesterday.

I said that your Lordship attached great importance to the establishment of a permanent International Arbitration Tribunal which was now being discussed at the Hague, and that you were supported in this view by France and by Russia. Your Lordship, however, had some reason to apprehend that the German Government, who opposed that proposal, were seeking to influence the Austro-Hungarian Government to join them in their resistance to it. In making this essentially confidential communication to him, I hoped that his Excellency would be able to assure me that this Government would not oppose the scheme favoured by Her Majesty's Government and the other Great Powers I had mentioned.

Count Goluchowski replied that he was not averse to the establishment of the permanent Tribunal in question, but that he would be unable to agree to a decision by which a reference to it should be made obligatory. In answer to a further direct question I put to him, his Excellency said that there was no understanding between him and the German Government with respect to the line to be followed in this question. The German Government had simply communicated to him their standpoint regarding the proposed Tribunal, and this excluded all obligatory reference even on those questions of secondary importance which were indicated in the Russian programme as subjects on which the Tribunal might be usefully appealed to. His Excellency repeated that he was not acting in concert with Germany in this affair. In fact he had from the first been in favour of arbitration, though he must confess that

he did not well see how the plan which was in view of creating a permanent Tribunal for the settlement of international differences could be carried out in the face of the opposition of even only one of the Great Powers.

I gave suitable expression to my satisfaction at receiving these assurances from his Excellency. I could not, I said, for a moment believe that the Imperial Government would subordinate their policy in this affair to that of any other Government. The proposal we had discussed, however, seemed to me to have all the greater importance as probably being the most valuable result that was to be expected from the Conference. I referred to what His Majesty the Emperor had been pleased to say to me on a recent occasion of the importance of the Conference not separating without having some result to show. Count Goluchowski said that he fully shared these views.

With regard to the above, I would observe that whatever may be Count Goluchowski's personal views on this question, and I have no reason to doubt the sincerity of the reply he gave me, the current here at this moment, as far as I am able to judge, is not in the direction of subserviency to German counsels.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

(1) [On the 9th June Count Goluchowski had informed the German representative at Vienna that he did not wish the Triple Alliance to be divided on this question, *G.P.*, XV, 259. On the 15th (*ib.* 283), apparently as a result of this interview, he made representations to Berlin not to oppose a voluntary arbitration tribunal in view of the general support given to it. On the 21st June Herr von Bülow reported to the Kaiser (*ib.* 302-4) that Germany was quite isolated on this question, and that even Austria-Hungary was asking her to accept it. The Kaiser then consented to conciliate the Czar, but with vigorous comments. Roumania's objection to international commissions of enquiry, not being supported by Count Goluchowski, was not sustained by Germany, Riehthofen to Münster, the 16th July, *ib.* 335. A number of observations on the subsequent attitude of the different Powers to arbitration are printed in *ib.* 306-n.]

Herr von Bülow was made a Count on the 23rd June.]

No. 282.

Note on the Limitation of Armaments.⁽¹⁾

The Peace Conference has closed one chapter of its deliberations with an expression of opinion that a reduction of the naval and military burdens, which weigh so heavily upon the world, is greatly to be desired in the interests of humanity.

If the work of this Assembly has been barren of results in what was at first the leading motive of its programme, it has at least shown clearly where we stand in relation to the whole matter, and how many long and difficult negotiations will have to be carried on before the next step in advance can be ventured with any prospect of success.

Germany is the military centre of gravity of Europe, and all ideas of effecting any reduction, small or great, in the present burden of armaments on land, must inevitably fail if they do not receive support from Berlin. They do not receive such support; on the contrary, they are met with the plain intimation that Germany will, under no circumstances, be a party to any limitation and still less to any reduction of armaments: they consequently fall to the ground.

To this state of affairs, with all it entails both for Germany and for her neighbours, there is a corollary, namely, that the rivalry between the great military Powers of Europe will not allow any very great or very sudden increase of naval expenditure at the expense of army budgets, and that Russia herself will not be able to reduce her military expenditure, or to divert it either to the navy or to other uses.

(1) Enclosure in Sir J. Pauncefote's despatch No. 74 of the 31st July, 1899.

England, as the greatest naval Power, has not taken up the same uncompromising attitude in relation to naval armaments, and the question naturally arises whether some agreement may not be possible, if not with all, at least with some of the greater naval Powers.

I have ascertained the views of the Naval Delegates here, and am compelled to admit, and to state my reasons for the belief, that there is not at present the slightest chance of any agreement of the kind.

Having asked the Russian Naval Delegate to state why Mr. Goschen's speech had not been even mentioned during the debates, I received an explanation in the following sense :—

England is the very last naval Power that Russia either considers or fears. The reason is a very simple one. She considers our fleet ten times more powerful than her own, and will never wage a naval war against us. If forced to declare or accept war, she will shut up her fleet in fortified ports and fight us on land in the East. If she did otherwise, and even sank five British ships for every three Russian, she would soon have no navy, and we should still remain strong. With no marine Russia would be in a bad posture in face of her continental rivals, who would not fail to take advantage of her weakness.

She could, it is true, attack our sea-borne trade, but the results accruing from such action have been exaggerated, and Russia has few cruisers and no coaling-stations; her ships would soon die of inanition in neutral ports, even if they escaped destruction, and her geographical position, as against the British Empire, is detestable in view of a naval war.

But, although anxious to meet us half-way, Russia cannot come to a separate understanding with England to limit naval armaments so long as there is no check upon the navies of Germany and Japan, with whose maritime strength Russia is mainly concerned, since she would gain nothing as against us, and lose all as against them.

But the German Naval Delegate has been as frank as his military colleague, and has made it quite clear that Germany will not hear of limiting naval armaments, while Japan, according to her Naval Representative, will only listen when she has reached the standard of the Great Naval Powers, that is to say, never.

Taking only the broad lines of the question, France is in many ways in a similar position to Russia, and is debarred from adhering to any agreement if the Triple Alliance stands aside. Neither can she afford to risk the military and political capital represented by her battle-ships against the heavy odds of a contest with England, since the loss of her fleet would expose what Colonies we might leave her to capture by her other rivals, and would gravely paralyse her power of defence in Europe by laying open her long coast-line to attack in the event of a continental war.

The two Powers, therefore, against whom our naval activity is confessedly directed will not singly fight us squarely at sea, since they cannot afford, as against other rivals, to lose their position as naval Powers, and they can refuse a naval combat with the greater equanimity since they know that our capacity for waging offensive war on the continent of Europe against their national armies is a quantity that may be neglected.

This situation is clearly and unmistakably bound up with the retention of our present maritime supremacy, and would change with any reduction in our standard of strength.

The Powers with whom France has to count are as resolute to refuse all compromise as are those that face Russia. The Italian Naval Delegate has informed me that his instructions were to agree to nothing in the shape or guise of limitation of armaments, and the Austrian Delegate was prepared to assume a similar attitude.

The difficulties in the way of naval disarmament are not at the top of the graduated scale of naval Powers, but at the bottom; they are none the less almost insuperable, and the crux of the problem lies in the fact that no Power can cry a halt while the one

next below him on the scale continues to arm, and that the latter will not cease to arm until he has reached an equality with the rival above him.

Moreover, the new policy of America and the rapid growth of her fleet are bringing a fresh set of considerations to the front.

The American Delegates have, it is true, stated that they stand apart from Europe, and that their naval policy has not relation to, and can have no importance for, the Powers of Europe. Mr. White indeed made an eloquent speech in defence of the policy of protection for private property at sea, and laid stress on the sentimental side of American character; but it is difficult to get credit for good intentions, and the French Admiral remarked to me at the close of the speech that the Americans had destroyed the Spanish navy and commerce, and now wanted no one to destroy theirs.

Captain Mahan⁽¹⁾ has not only stated that his Government will on no account even discuss the question of any limitation of naval armaments; he has also informed me that he considers that the vital interests of America now lie East and West, and no longer North and South; that the great question of the immediate future is China, and that the United States will be compelled, by facts if not by settled policy, to take a leading part in the struggle for Chinese markets, and that this will entail a very considerable increase in her naval forces in the Pacific, which again must influence the naval arrangements of at least five Powers.

It is understood that later on in the year a fresh attempt may be made to raise the question of limiting naval armaments.

The facts stated go to show that the success of such attempt is not to be counted on.⁽²⁾

CHARLES A COURT, *Lieutenant-Colonel,*
Military Attaché.

The Hague, July 29, 1899.

(1) [Described by the Kaiser as "our greatest and most dangerous foe," *G.P.*, XV, 183-n, 5th April, 1899.]

(2) [Suspicion of England's naval armaments as well as those of the United States and Japan was expressed by M. Witte, *G.P.*, XV, 165, and by Captain Siegel, the German naval delegate, the 28th June, 1899, *ib.* XV, 230. Admiral Fisher was criticised by him, XV, 230, and stated by Count Münster to have described the President of the Conference as "president of that nonsense," XV, 357, *v.* also *ib.* 306-n. The general views of the German diplomats are given in two despatches of Prince Radolin (the 13th July) and of Count Münster (the 17th July) in *G.P.*, XV, 349-359.]

[The Acte Final of the Peace Conference, with accompanying papers, is printed in *B.F.S.P.*, XCI, 963-1019; some correspondence in *Accounts and Papers*, 1899 (C 9090), CX, p. 85 *sqq.*]

No. 283.

Sir J. Pauncefoot to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. General 1697.

(No. 79.)

My Lord,

The Hague, D. July 31, 1899.

R. August 2, 1899.

. . . . We venture to lay before your Lordship the following observations on the results of that important gathering:—

Those results happily have dispelled the gloomy predictions of failure so largely indulged in when the Rescript of H.I.M. the Emperor of Russia was first made public, and indeed they have greatly surpassed the expectations of its most enthusiastic supporters.

Many of the delegates assembled at The Hague entered upon their duties with the conviction that nothing practical would come of their labours and their mission would end in the expression of benevolent sentiments and of pious hopes for the preservation of peace.

But before they had been at work a fortnight, a remarkable change came over the spirit of the Conference, and it was discovered that with a little goodwill it would

be possible to arrive at a common understanding on some of the questions propounded by the Circular of Count Mouravieff and which continue to agitate the civilised world.

It is true that the question of disarmament or even of the limitation of armaments and Budgets, which was put to the fore-front in the Circular, presented so many difficulties from the practical point of view that it was necessarily abandoned for the present.

But on all other points success was achieved, and in the brief space of two months a great international work has been accomplished fraught with the highest promise for the advancement of civilisation and the good of mankind.

That work consists in the production of three most important and beneficent codes destined to preserve the blessings of peace and to lessen the calamities of war.

Thanks to the noble initiative of one of the youngest and at the same time one of the most powerful rulers of the world, the great family of nations has met in solemn conclave to devise measures for the settlement of future differences on the basis of reason and justice and to denounce the arbitrament of the sword.

Thus the new century will open with brighter prospects of international peace and all nations must hail with satisfaction the admirable work of the Conference in humanising the laws of war both on land and at sea.

But the most important result of the Conference is the great work it has produced in its "Project of a Convention for the pacific settlement of international conflicts." That work, if it stood alone, would proclaim the success of the Conference. It was elaborated by a Committee composed of distinguished Jurists and Diplomats and it constitutes a complete code on the subject of good offices, mediation and arbitration. Its most striking and novel feature is the establishment of a Permanent Court of International Arbitration, which has so long been the dream of the advocates of peace, destined apparently, until now, never to be realised.

On this subject we commend to your Lordship's attention the valuable and interesting Report presented to the Conference by Monsieur le Chevalier Descamps⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

J. PAUNCEFOTE.

⁽¹⁾ [Personal details.]

No. 284.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3459.

(No. 440.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Paris, D. October 24, 1899.

R. October 25, 1899.

I waited on the President of the Republic yesterday. . . .⁽¹⁾

He went on to say that while he laid very great stress upon the value of the recent conference at The Hague, the result of which had been to regulate as it were the laws of war, he was not one of those who believed in the possibility of preventing all war by arbitration. Each nation must be the judge of the extent to which its honour is involved, and would be justified in declining to submit such a point to arbitration. War may also be forced upon a nation by the wilful act or misconduct of another in such a manner as to render arbitration inapplicable.

I expressed my entire agreement in the President's views; and I said that, while hoping, as all my countrymen undoubtedly do, for a speedy termination to the present hostilities in South Africa, they clearly fell under the exceptional category to which M. Loubet had just referred. . . .⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽¹⁾ [Personal details.]

CHAPTER VII.

THE SOUTH AFRICAN WAR.

No. 285.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3459.

(No. 422.)

My Lord,

Paris, D. October 1, 1899.

R. October 2, 1899.

Although, as I have often had occasion to point out, the French Press has no claim to be the *exponent* of public opinion and is in fact, for the most part, only the mouth-piece of mercenary and irresponsible mischief-mongers, I consider it right to draw your Lordship's attention to the continuance of its malicious mis-representations of the situation between Great Britain and the Transvaal.

It is lamentable to find that among the very few daily newspapers from which fairness and truth-telling may be expected, there is not one which upon this question has not allowed itself to be influenced either by the invincible attraction of abusing England, or by the considerations of pecuniary interest, into publishing articles written apparently for the sole purpose of distorting the facts, and presenting an erroneous issue to the public.

This line of conduct necessarily produces the grossest inconsistencies in the effusions devoted to the denunciation of the policy of Her Majesty's Government; so that in the same article may be found accusations of the brutality with which the overwhelmingly superior force of Great Britain is being organised for the conquest of the Transvaal, and contemptuous references to the delays and difficulties which, it is asserted, are characterising the effort made to despatch a single Army Corps to South Africa.

The favourite theme is, however, the prospect of a combination of the European Powers in favour of the Boers; a prospect which, it is considered, the hostility of the German and Russian Press to England shows to be something neither visionary nor impracticable.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 286.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3459.

(No. 441.) Most Confidential.

My Lord,

Paris, D. October 24, 1899.

R. October 25, 1899.

There is no doubt that among my diplomatic colleagues here there are several who are apprehensive as to the intentions of France and Russia to take advantage of what they consider to be England's difficulties at this juncture for their own ends; either by absolutely attacking her, or at any rate by pursuing a policy which it might be impossible for her to resent, as she would do if her hands were entirely free.⁽¹⁾

My Italian Colleague (whose temperament is undoubtedly pessimistic) has recently expressed to me his grave apprehension of the designs of the French and Russian Governments. The presence of Count Mouravieff in Paris at this moment he considers to be very mischievous. It is true that he looks upon the Russian

(1) [Details as to press.]

Minister for Foreign Affairs as a very second-rate individual; but he remarked to me that the Count's mediocre intelligence rendered him perhaps more dangerous than he otherwise would be. He referred to the encouragement which, to his own certain knowledge Count Mouravieff gave to M. Delcassé last year during his visit to Paris at the time of the Fashoda incident; and observed that, although on his arrival at Vienna the Count had discovered that it was expedient to "put water into his wine," he feared that the experience had not done his Excellency much good, and that he would be trying to play the same trick over again.

Count Tornielli went on to say that it was a mistake to suppose that the Dual Alliance was principally concerned with taking precaution against the Triple Alliance. There is an absolute certainty that from the outset the contingency of common action by the two Powers against Great Britain had been foreseen and calculated. His Excellency observed, however, that so long as France and Russia failed to draw Germany into co-operation with them (as they had succeeded in doing in the case of Japan) they would not venture upon any overt act of interference; although they would undoubtedly try to make mischief wherever possible; and cause irritation by rendering any outstanding question unnecessarily acute.

While there was nothing absolutely original in Count Tornielli's remarks they were evidently inspired by strong feeling. He closed them by the observation that in his opinion there was no likelihood that Franco-Russian blandishments would be successful at Berlin.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 287.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3459.

(No. 450.) Secret.

My Lord,

Paris, D. October 27, 1899.

R. October 28, 1899.

(¹) . . . Your Lordship must be so well informed of the general tendency of the utterances of all the Continental newspapers in the direction of the formation of a general league against England, that I need make no further allusion to their attitude. The object of my present despatch is to draw your attention to a communication made to me this morning by the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires, the nature of which may be already known to you from Her Majesty's Ambassador at Vienna, or Her Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Madrid.

M. Dumba came to ask me if I had succeeded in finding out anything about the proceedings of Count Mouravieff during his stay in Paris. He said that Count Goluchowski was most anxious to know what his Excellency had succeeded in doing with the French Government; and in order to show what he anticipated would be found to be the lines on which the Count had proceeded, he forwarded to M. Dumba a copy of a secret despatch from the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Madrid, reporting a most confidential communication made to him by Senor Silvela himself.

It appears from this despatch that Senor Silvela had had a conversation with Count Mouravieff at San Sebastian in the course of which the latter had stated that the time had arrived when it became necessary for the Powers of Europe to take common action against the ever-increasing aggressions and expansion of England. That there was every prospect of the conclusion of an understanding between Russia, France and Germany for this purpose. That Count Mouravieff felt almost secure of the adhesion of Germany to this scheme; but not quite so sure that the French Government would consent to engage themselves very positively, partly because they

(¹) [Reference to press.]

are not by any means sure of the extent to which they would be supported by the public opinion of the country, and partly because the brunt of a rupture would fall chiefly upon France. Nevertheless, Count Mouravieff felt pretty confident of an ultimate agreement between the three Powers, and from that agreement Spain should certainly not stand aloof. The three Powers would undoubtedly desire and value her co-operation, and she would be adequately rewarded for it.

Count Mouravieff expatiated upon the many reasons for which Spain had cause to be England's enemy, of course laying great stress upon Gibraltar, and upon England's intention to keep Morocco in her own hands, a booty which, if Spain agreed with France, Russia and Germany, should be her reward, France contenting herself with all the rest of North Africa.

His Excellency appealed to the friendly conduct of France towards Spain during the recent war, as well as to the loyal manner in which she had supported the existing dynasty against the Carlists and the Republicans; and argued that Spain's only admissible policy is to cultivate the closest intimacy with France.

M. Dumba in giving me this information begged that it should be looked upon as most confidential and only reported in a "secret" despatch. He went on to say that although he had not as yet been able to learn from anyone what Count Mouravieff had been up to during his stay, he could not, after receiving this information, doubt that he had been discussing the project of a coalition against England. He had been reproached by Count Goluchowski already on account of his inability to obtain details of Count Mouravieff's dealings with the French Government; but although after four years residence in Paris he numbered among his acquaintances many well-informed persons, he had so far utterly failed to pick up any trustworthy information. . . . (1)

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

(1) [Personal reference to M. Dumba.]

[ED. NOTE.—Count Mouravieff left Paris on the 28th October, 1899. The despatch of the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires is also described in Tschirschky's despatch from St. Petersburg, the 24th October, *G.P.* XV, 133-4. For further light on Continental opinion relating to the war and to projects or rumours of intervention or mediation see *G.P.*, Vol. XV, Chapters 101 and 103, and Vol. XVII, Chapter 111 and *Lec's Life of King Edward VII*, Vol. 1, [1925], Chapter 39.

For Dr. Leyds' activities in the months before the war see his *Eenige Correspondentie uit 1899*.]

No. 288.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Italy 800.

(No. 210.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Rome, D. November 2, 1899.

R. November 6, 1899.

M. Visconti-Venosta spoke to me yesterday as to the feeling in Italy respecting the war in South Africa. He said that the sympathies of the great majority of the nation were favourable to Great Britain, although, before hostilities commenced, there had been a certain amount of sentiment in favour of the Boers.

There was, however, he said, considerable apprehension as to the action that might be taken by some of the Great Powers in the event of England annexing the Transvaal and the Orange Free State. It seemed probable that they would claim compensation in some other quarter for such an addition to the British Empire. If such compensation were to be sought in the Mediterranean it would be a serious matter for Italy. I said that in view of such a possibility the Italian Government should keep a strict watch and be prepared, with the assistance of their allies, to endeavour to avert any such injury to Italian interests. I asked his Excellency whether he had learned anything as to any designs which Germany might have on

the Atlantic coast of Morocco, referred to in my despatch No 177, Confidential, of the 20th August last. He said that no information on the subject had reached him. He thought it probable that France might take this opportunity of occupying Touat, which she coveted as a means of communication between Algeria and Senegal.

He asked me if I thought that any resistance would be offered to French interference with the integrity of Morocco. I said that, as far as my personal opinion went, it would be difficult to prevent the occupation of Touat, but that it was a part of the traditional policy of England that any attack on the Mediterranean coast of Morocco, and especially on Tangier, should be resisted by force.

I have, &c.

CURRIE.

No. 289.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3460.

(No. 462.)

My Lord,

Paris, D. November 3, 1899.

R. November 4, 1899.

In the autumn of 1893 my predecessor in this post addressed to the Foreign Office a State Paper of unusual interest, the communication of which to Her Majesty's Representatives abroad excited, as I well recollect, no common attention and excitement on the part of all my colleagues in the great capitals of Europe.

The attitude now taken by the Continental press on the merits of the dispute between Great Britain and the two South African Republics has within the last few days brought forcibly to my mind Lord Dufferin's brilliant essay; and especially the incomparable and thoroughgoing estimate given by him of the sentiments of France towards England. . . .⁽¹⁾

Bad as the press seemed to Lord Dufferin at the date of the despatch, it is immeasurably worse at this moment; and however contemptible and farfetched its abuse may appear to us, we have to remember that some of the most egregiously offensive of these journals enjoy a wide circulation throughout the Provinces of France, and exercise an influence over the ignorant and credulous against which there exists unhappily no counter-agent. . . .

With an excitable people like these it will, I fear, be at any moment easy to arouse such a current of passion as would carry away all the checks which a sensible Ministry, such as I believe is now in office, would seek to interpose against the forcible rupture of amity. It is therefore with very sincere relief that I see that the calmness with which our reverses in South Africa are being faced in England has produced an immediate effect upon public opinion in Paris. Newspapers which previously found no words too strong to characterise British bullying are expressing in terms, which I can honestly call complimentary, their recognition of the dignified attitude of the English public in view of the disappointing and unexpected turn taken by the course of military events. . . .

In view of the currency given throughout Europe to the plans for the formation of an anti-British league, I cannot but think that no better corrective of such animosity could have been found than the evidence thus given by my countrymen of the continuance of their traditional qualities. . . .

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

(¹) See below Vol. II, Chapter XIV, pp. 285-8.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1286.

(No. 251.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. November 3, 1899.

My Lord,

R. November 13, 1899.

Count Nigra came to see me yesterday morning, chiefly, he was kind enough to say, to express his sincere concern at the unfavourable turn taken by our military operations in Natal. . . .

I asked my colleague whether he had noticed any indications of a possible combination hostile to us—such as was clamoured for by the more violent organs in Russia and France.

Count Nigra replied that he had had some conversation with Count Goluchowski the day before on this point. He had asked his Excellency whether the Imperial Government proposed making any public declaration of neutrality.

Count Goluchowski had answered that they had no such intention—(I have already had the honour to report in this sense to your Lordship)—but they had made it authoritatively known that enlistments here for the war in South Africa would be strictly prohibited.

As regarded the attitude of the Powers, Count Goluchowski had positively stated that the reports which reached him from the different European capitals agreed as to there being no likelihood of an attempt at combined action against England. Count Nigra went on to say that he had accordingly reported to that effect to his Government. As for himself, he added, he was of opinion that, given the pacific bent of the Emperor of Russia, the all-absorbing importance attached in France to the success of the forthcoming Exhibition, and the colonial and commercial interests which made it a necessity for Germany to keep on good terms with us, we could not have entered on the contest in South Africa with a freer hand. . . .

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1286.

(No. 252.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. November 3, 1899.

My Lord,

R. November 13, 1899.

With reference to my immediately preceding despatch, I have the honour to report to your Lordship that, during a visit I paid to Count Goluchowski this afternoon, I endeavoured to extract from his Excellency some direct confirmation of Count Mouravieff's proceedings as confided by the Austrian Chargé d'Affaires at Paris to Her Majesty's Ambassador. . . .

He admitted that he had heard of some absurd scheme having been broached by Count Mouravieff, which included the acquisition of Ceuta by Russia. The Queen-Regent, added his Excellency, was fortunately far too sensible to lend herself to such a project.

In the course of further desultory conversation in reference to the above, Count Goluchowski, who is seldom loth to pass criticism on his St. Petersburg colleague, was led into allowing that although the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs had, during his stay at Paris, been chiefly taken up with the amusements and seductions of that city, he was at the same time sufficiently fond of getting himself talked about to have encouraged the idea that he was engaged there in important negotiations, though it was self-evident, observed his Excellency, that real work of that kind could

be done better and more discreetly by a less conspicuous negotiator. However this might be, added Count Goluchowski, and he must admit that he had been unable to find out anything precise on that point, he believed that if Count Mouravieff had worked at Paris for the object imputed to him of getting up a combination against us, he had not achieved much.

The main fact simply was, his Excellency went on to say, that Germany would certainly not commit herself to any joint action against us. There could be no doubt as to this, and, in proof of such being the case, added Count Goluchowski, a final agreement had been come to only two days ago at Berlin (so I understand his Excellency to say) in the Samoa affair. . . .

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 292.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Africa (War in S. Africa) 269.

(No. 136.) Africa. Very Confidential.

Brussels, D. November 4, 1899.

My Lord,

R. November 6, 1899.

Baron Lambermont gave me to-day, with his usual liberality of detail, some of the impressions he derives from the study of passing events as affected by the war in South Africa.

I may be permitted to summarise his views on the probable attitude of the three Continental Powers now more directly concerned, as follows:—

His Excellency considers that, for the moment, the German Emperor holds the decisive voice, and he believes that His Imperial Majesty will not join Russia and France in any act of hostility towards Great Britain.

Under such circumstances France and Russia must necessarily remain quiet, and though it is possible that the Chauvinist element at Paris may try to push the Government into some foolish action in Egypt, Baron Lambermont thinks that the necessity of making the Exhibition next year a great success will save the French Government from rushing into any unnecessary quarrels. Moreover, his Excellency considers that, even in Egypt, France can do nothing against England without the consent of Germany, and that, he believes, will not be given.

As regards Russia, she is not yet ready for any great effort, but must wait till her railways to the Far East are more complete, a matter of some five years.

Baron Lambermont attaches great importance to the interview which the Emperor of Russia is to have with the German Emperor, and seems to believe that the latter, in spite of the anti-English denunciations of a portion of the German press, will exercise his influence in favour of peace and neutrality.

Baron Lambermont seemed to attach special importance to an article on Her Majesty's Government and the South African war published in yesterday's "Temps," but which I have not seen yet.

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 293.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Africa (War in S. Africa) 270.

(No. 137.) Africa.

Brussels, D. November 5, 1899.

My Lord,

R. November 6, 1899.

. . . . The "Indépendance Belge" and the "Petit Bleu" continue to be most violently hostile to England, but, unfortunately, almost all the Belgian press is pro-Boer in its sentiments. . . .

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 294.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3460.

(No. 467.) Secret.

Paris, D. November 7, 1899.

My Lord,

R. November 8, 1899.

At a late hour this afternoon I have received, from a source which I regard as most trustworthy, some information as to the proceedings of Count Mouravieff during his visit to Paris. My informant was in a position to acquire this information at first hand, and it seems to coincide very sufficiently with the deductions which follow from the reports sent to Vienna from Madrid.

My informant states that Count Mouravieff devoted himself to the task of persuading the French Government (chiefly, of course, M. Delcassé) to pursue a line of policy hostile to England. He appears to have set that object before him as the one aim of his own conduct, but shows his hand very openly in regard to the expediency of putting France in the foreground. In this it appears, however, that he decidedly failed, at any rate for the moment. M. Delcassé, according to my informant, maintained, in opposition to Count Mouravieff, that France's true policy is to keep on a friendly footing with England, and in this view he has been supported by his colleagues and by the President. The Count has gone away greatly disappointed at the non-success of all the arguments he employed.

My informant went on to say that, although unsuccessful now, Count Mouravieff reckons upon a change of Government early next year, and he believes that any other Minister than M. Delcassé is likely to be more pliable. With the growing bitterness of sentiment towards England, he considers that it will not be a difficult thing to force a new Foreign Minister into the line of conduct which he advocates, and he does not give the President of the Republic credit for being strong enough to resist the pressure which could then be exercised. . . .

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 295.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury

F.O. Austria 1286.

(No. 256.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. November 10, 1899.

My Lord,

R. November 13, 1899.

The Vienna and even the Provincial Press continues to attack England and to manifest a spitefully malignant satisfaction at what it represents as almost irreparable reverses to the British arms. It is difficult to account for this spirit of *Schadenfreude*

on the part of Austrian Journalists, in a question which has admittedly no bearing whatever on the external relations of the Empire, otherwise than by assuming it to be dictated by interested motives which it is needless to specify. . . .⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

H. RUMBOLD.

⁽¹⁾ Details as to press.

No. 296.

Sir H. MacDonell to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Africa (War in S. Africa) 271.

(No. 79.) Africa. Most Confidential.

Lisbon, D. November 16, 1899.

My Lord,

R. November 20, 1899.

In my No. 77, Africa, of the 8th instant, I complained of the violent tone of the Portuguese press with regard to the campaign in South Africa, and informed your Lordship that I had taken it upon myself to unofficially call the attention of the Minister of Foreign Affairs to the unmeasured abuse levelled at certain members of Her Majesty's Government, which far exceeded in offensiveness the licence which the Portuguese Government tolerate when dealing with their own authorities. . . .

Far be it from me to identify the Portuguese Government with the current of antagonism to England which runs so freely at the present moment throughout Portugal; but the significance of the attitude adopted by the press, and I may add by all classes—with the exception of the King, and, perhaps, a few of those interested in the foreign policy of the country—should not be overlooked.

The ill-feeling caused throughout the country by the events of 1891 left behind it a sentiment of hostility which the Republican and "reptile" press have taken every occasion to turn to account. The educated and governing classes, while at heart sharing the antipathy of their fellow-countrymen, are too well aware, however, that politically, financially and commercially they are absolutely dependent on England's friendship and goodwill. . . .⁽¹⁾

I have, &c.

H. G. MACDONNELL.

⁽¹⁾ [For the full text of this despatch *v. supra* No. 120, pp. 96–7.]

No. 297.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1286.

(No. 270.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. November 21, 1899.

My Lord,

R. November 23, 1899.

The German Ambassador returned here a few days ago from prolonged leave of absence.

During a visit I paid him yesterday he spoke to me, of his own accord, very freely of the Emperor William's journey to England and the stir made over it in the German Press. The Emperor, he said, was greatly put out by ("ganz ausser sich darüber") the mischievous tone adopted on this occasion and thoroughly resented the efforts made to prevent him from carrying out a project he had cherished and looked forward to ever since it was first resolved upon in July last.

"You may credit my words," said my colleague, "for I have been constantly with the Emperor of late, and quite recently he was staying with me at Liebenberg. His Majesty talked of little else beyond his longing to see the Queen again and of his deep

affection for Her Majesty, who had always been so good to him and was bound up with his earliest recollections."

The Emperor spoke very severely of the attitude of those who seemed deliberately bent on producing ill-will between Germany and Great Britain. It showed utter want of sense and political judgment. The right policy for Germany was to keep on very cordial terms with Great Britain.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 298.

Mr. C. F. F. Adam to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Spain 2109.

(No. 243.)

Madrid, D. November 27, 1899.

My Lord,

R. December 18, 1899.

Although since the outbreak of War in South Africa the Press in this country has been more than ever full of false reports and scurrilous insinuations respecting Great Britain, I have not thought it worth while to trouble your Lordship with specimens of these effusions, which are best treated with good-humoured contempt.

To-day, however, the "Imparcial" publishes a letter from its correspondent at Cadiz, copy and translation of which I have the honour to enclose herewith,⁽¹⁾ containing certain statements which it may be advisable to contradict, or to bring to the notice of the Spanish Government.

The greater part of the article consists of a description of the defences and harbour works which have recently been carried out at Gibraltar.

This, though a source of irritation to Spanish pride, is not in itself a matter for complaint, but the statement that the British are constantly acquiring land in the neighbourhood of Gibraltar, as well as in the Canaries and the Balearic Islands, is directly aimed at keeping up in the minds of the Spanish people the suspicion that Her Majesty's Government is always bent on robbing and dismembering their country which seems to haunt even intelligent Spaniards like a nightmare.

I have, &c.

C. F. FREDERICK ADAM.

MINUTE.

It is very seldom in these days desirable to take notice of newspaper inventions.

S.

No. 299.

Sir E. Satow to Lord Salisbury.

(Private.)⁽¹⁾

November 30, 1899.

I have been much struck by the way in which several members of the Japan Cabinet, including the Ministers of War and Finance, besides other persons highly placed, have expressed to me their anxiety that the War in South Africa may be soon over.

[Preparations as to navy, &c.]

. . . . He (Colonel Churchill) also said that the Japanese Government believe that about May next the Russians will make a move in Corea, if at that time we are still busy in South Africa. Putting everything together I conclude the Japanese expectation is that they will then be in a position to put 250,000 combatants into the field.

⁽¹⁾ From the private papers of Sir E. Satow.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3460.

(No. 500.)

My Lord,

Paris, D. December 1, 1899.

R. December 2, 1899.

At his weekly reception the day before yesterday M. Delcassé mentioned to me the attacks of the French press upon England, and said that not only did the Government dissociate itself entirely from them, but that he was convinced that they did not represent the real feelings of the majority of Frenchmen, and that, in fact, the provincial Prefects had telegraphed in this sense from every quarter in France.

I have already told M. Delcassé my mind upon this subject so often and in such language, but always unofficially, that upon this occasion I said but very few words upon a topic which I find inexpressibly disgusting and loathsome. I confined myself to assenting to his observations as far as the Government are concerned, and to the expression of my hope that he was right about the better sort of public opinion.

To tell your Lordship the truth, however, I cannot honestly say that I believe M. Delcassé's statement on the latter head to be as accurate as I have no doubt he wishes it to be. From all that I hear and see, I fear that the calumnies, the ridicule, and the insults with which all the French newspapers (with but very few exceptions) are filled represent the sentiments of the majority of Frenchmen, and afford pleasure and amusement to them. . . .⁽¹⁾

Your Lordship will, I am sure, enter into the feelings which the painful situation cannot but cause to the Representative of the Queen in a country which appears to have gone mad with jealousy, spite, and resentment. I confess that at a moment not so very long ago, when a section of the English public joined in a cry, the purport of which was to boycott the coming International Exhibition, I thought that there was but little sense and sound judgment in taking so strong a view of a purely domestic French scandal. At the present crisis, when our national honour has been attacked in its most sensitive point, it is well, I think, to remember that the Government of the Republic is not only not an accomplice in the offence, but is absolutely powerless on its own part to put an end to a state of things which permits the most shameless insults to be heaped by the press upon the Chief of the Executive, upon the Legislature, and upon every institution respect for which is in other countries insured by legal provisions.

The standard of morality and decency in France is now so low that political passion indulges unrepressed in the widest licence of malevolence. I do not say that this condition of things affords any excuse for the outrages of which we have to complain; but I do think that it gives us some ground for admiring an Administration which has shown so much firmness and determination in resisting abuses as the present one has done; and among the members of which can be found a Minister bold enough, as M. Delcassé was the other day, to denounce the insensate folly of those who advocate for France the policy of international provocation and defiance.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

⁽¹⁾ [Details as to press.]

No. 301.

Minute by the Marquess of Salisbury.

Memorandum Private and Confidential upon Delagoa Bay. Prepared for Transmission to Sir R. Buller on his Proposal for a Blockade of Delagoa Bay.⁽¹⁾

(Private.)⁽²⁾

December 15, 1899.

I assent to the memorandum, but I doubt if it goes far enough. It appears to admit as possible a blockade without a declaration of war against Portugal. Such a blockade *as against neutrals* is I believe without precedent: and it seems to be out of the question to assume that either France or Germany would submit to have their vessels stopped by a blockade for which there was no warrant in international law. A war against Portugal must bring in those two Powers at least. They would offer them assistance ("mediation") and obtain in return valuable rights over the Portuguese islands.

But I do not think even Buller contemplates declaring war against Portugal. I have seen no arguments to make me believe that without such a step a blockade is possible.

I have written very earnestly to Mr. Goschen to urge a more systematic search for contraband of war; but I have not got any answer; there has been hardly time.

S.

MINUTE.

It was not intended to make any such admission, but I altered it to make the point quite clear.

T. H. S.

⁽¹⁾ Not reproduced.⁽²⁾ From the Sanderson MSS.

No. 302.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1471.

(No. 319.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. December 20, 1899.

My Lord,

R. December 25, 1899.

I called upon Count von Bülow yesterday, when he received the Heads of Missions, and thus had an opportunity of seeing him for the first time since my return to my post.

His Excellency at first alluded to a very amiable letter which he had received from your Lordship expressing your regret at not having been able to see him during his visit to England in attendance on the Emperor. He had answered that letter by expressing the hope that he might have an opportunity of making your personal acquaintance.

Count von Bülow then went on to refer to the war in South Africa. The Emperor had been deeply grieved to hear of the losses which the British army had suffered, more especially in the persons of so many gallant officers with whom His Majesty was personally acquainted. It was sincerely to be hoped, and he did not doubt, that the reinforcements now on their way to South Africa would insure the success of the British arms, for, speaking as a German, and from a selfish point of view, any diminution of the authority and prestige of Great Britain would be little short of a calamity for Germany. There was scarcely a thinking man in Germany who did not share this view, and did not now hope for British successes. It was true that German public opinion had been against England, but this opinion was purely platonic and based upon sentiment. There was the not unnatural sympathy for the weak against

the strong. There was a certain amount of jealousy of England's enormous Empire. There was commercial rivalry, and there was the feeling that, in her attempts at colonial expansion, Germany had been hardly treated by England, but there was no wish on the part of Germany to see England's position as a great Power diminished. I had, perhaps, noticed a more satisfactory tone in a great portion of the press, and in many cases the abuse which had been lavished upon England in certain agrarian and Conservative newspapers was intended as an attack upon the German Government.

While, however, German public opinion was of this purely platonic description, in France and Russia it bore a far different character. In those two countries a defeat of England would no doubt be regarded with satisfaction.

Count Bülow did not believe that any international complications would arise in consequence of the difficulties with which England had to deal in South Africa, and he added that the calm and dignified resolution with which England had met her reverses had called forth general admiration, and had proved that she was really a great nation.

I asked Count Bülow if a report which I had heard was true that the Russians were sending large bodies of troops to the frontier of Afghanistan, but I did not tell him where I had heard the report.

His Excellency said that he had not heard it, or he would certainly have mentioned it to me, but he believed that Russia was too much occupied with her internal affairs, the completion of her railways, and her difficulties in procuring money, to seek for foreign complications. It was no doubt true that she was paying great attention to Persia, and it could scarcely be doubted that she hoped to obtain a port on the Persian Gulf. She had raised but little objection to the Concession for the railway to Bagdad, which seemed to indicate that she was less interested in Mesopotamia than in Persia.

His Excellency did not believe that there was any danger of a movement on the part of France, who would be most averse to do anything which might imperil the success of the forthcoming Exhibition. Had this not been the case, it might easily be feared that France would have taken advantage of England's difficulties to bring about a change in the situation in the Mediterranean by making a move towards Morocco or Tripoli.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 303.

Sir E. Fane to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Denmark 557.

(No. 2.) Confidential.

Copenhagen, D. January 1, 1900.

My Lord,

R. January 8, 1900.

Count Benckendorff, the Russian Minister, who has just returned from St. Petersburg, has imparted to one of my colleagues that His Majesty the Emperor of Russia is doing all in his power in order to allay the hostile feeling towards Great Britain which seems to prevail in Russia on the subject of the Transvaal war, and that Count Mouravieff is loyally seconding the determination of His Imperial Majesty that Russia shall not be drawn into any interference with this South African question.

I have, &c.

EDMUND FANE.

No. 304.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Africa 434.

(No. 2.) Africa.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. January 4, 1900.

R. January 8, 1900.

With reference to my telegram No. 13, Africa, of the 30th ultimo, I have the honour to report that, shortly before 7 o'clock in the evening of that day, Count Bülow sent me a message by telephone, asking me to call upon him at once.

On my arrival at his house, his Excellency told me that he was most anxious to see me, in consequence of the seizure of the German mail-steamer "Bundesrath" by an English man-of-war. The ship had been taken to Durban, and his Excellency hoped that orders would be sent to release her as soon as possible, if it should be found that she did not carry contraband of war. Count Hatzfeldt had been instructed to bring the case to your Lordship's notice, but Count Bülow begged me also to telegraph to your Lordship on the subject. The Emperor was coming to his Excellency's house that evening, and he wished to be able to inform His Majesty that he had done all in his power to procure the speedy release of the ship.

I replied that I had absolutely no information on the subject, but that I would telegraph at once to your Lordship. I asked his Excellency particularly whether his request was that measures should be taken for the speedy release of the ship if no contraband were found on board.

His Excellency answered in the affirmative, and, on my asking how it would be if contraband were found on board, shrugged his shoulders, and did not give a direct reply, but he added that he had received most positive assurances from the Company, and that he honestly believed that no contraband would be found.

His Excellency then went on to speak of the reports which had attained such prominence in the English press of the large number of German officers of the Reserve who had taken service in the Transvaal. His Excellency was convinced that these reports were grossly exaggerated. So far as the Government were aware, there were only two former German officers who had gone to South Africa. . . .

With regard to Colonel Schiel, about whom so much had been written, he had never been in the German service at all. He had formerly been a non-commissioned officer in the Austrian army, but had become naturalised years ago in the Transvaal, and must therefore be considered as a citizen of the South African Republic.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 305.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1297.

(No. 11.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. January 10, 1900.

R. January 13, 1900.

At a State Ball given last night at the Hofburg, His Majesty the Emperor honoured me with a few minutes' conversation. His Majesty, whom I had not seen for some time, was pleased to greet me very graciously, indeed warmly.

After making particular enquiries about Her Majesty the Queen, and thus giving me an opportunity of acquitting myself of the messages with which I had been charged by Her Majesty on the occasion of my recent visit to Windsor Castle, the Emperor referred to events in South Africa, prefacing his remarks by saying with marked emphasis, that in this war he was entirely on the English side. The words used by His Majesty were, "Dans cette guerre je suis complètement Anglais."

The Emperor expressed great regret at the difficulties we were contending with at the seat of war, and said that he sincerely hoped the campaign, which had unfortunately received an untoward direction, and had gone wrong ("sich verfahren hatte") at the beginning, would soon take a favourable turn.

In reply to the Emperor's very cordial language, I said that the respect and regard entertained for His Majesty in England were such that the fact that he so warmly sympathised with us at this time of trial would, I felt sure, be very highly appreciated.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 306.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Africa 434.

(No. 19.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 13, 1900.

Baron von Eckardstein called at the Foreign Office yesterday, and stated to Mr. Bertie, for my information, that the German Government had received with satisfaction the assurance which I had given him on the 10th instant that I would do everything in my power to avoid, if possible, the recurrence of such incidents as those of the German ships recently seized. The German Government, he said, had succeeded with the greatest difficulty in getting the questions in the Reichstag put off. All the parties except the extreme left had announced that they would interpellate the Government on Monday next, the 15th instant, respecting the captured ships.

In the interests of undisturbed friendly political relations between Germany and England, the German Government would do anything they could to calm the Reichstag, as well as public opinion, and if I could see my way to give an assurance that mail-steamers would not be interfered with—which matter the German Government understood that I was considering—it would greatly assist them.

With regard to the question discussed between Baron von Eckardstein and myself as to a parallel of latitude down to which all ships should be exempt from search, the German Government would be greatly obliged if I could see my way to fix some point other than parallel 10, as that parallel appeared, in my opinion, not to be suitable, owing to steamers when south of Mombasa hugging the Portuguese coast so close as to be within territorial limits.

The German Government would, Baron Eckardstein said, regard it as extremely considerate on my part if a solution of the matter could be found before Monday, as that day had been fixed for the interpellations in the Reichstag. This was all the more desirable if the statement in the press was true, that the search of the "Bundesrath" cargo would take ten days more.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 307.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury

F.O. Austria 1297.

(No. 13.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. January 13, 1900.

R. January 22, 1900.

The German Ambassador, who had gone to Berlin to thank the Emperor William for the high mark of favour just bestowed upon him, came back in time for the Court Ball at the Hofburg on Tuesday last. On meeting him there, I asked him what news he brought with him. He replied, with some signs of irritation (possibly reflecting

annoyance in higher quarters) that the excitement at Berlin on the question of the detention of the German mail-steamers was intense, and the situation so strained ("gespannt") as to make matters very difficult for the Government. . . .

An Austrian acquaintance of mine, who is intimately acquainted with the German Chancellor, Prince Hohenlohe, and was recently staying with him in the country, tells me that the Prince expressed great concern about the South African war, in which he is entirely on the British side. The Prince said that he frequently prayed that our success might be speedy and complete. His great fear was that the French, whose moods are incalculable ("unberechenbar"), might suddenly spring upon us the Egyptian or some other awkward question, and place us and Europe in a great difficulty.

I asked my informant whether the Chancellor had expressed any apprehensions with regard to Russia.

He said that Prince Hohenlohe referred to the disquieting rumours circulated about Russian plans in connection with the Transvaal war as sensational and misleading.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 308.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. France 3493.

(No. 29.) Secret.

My Lord,

Paris, D. January 19, 1900.

R. January 22, 1900.

I had the honour to address to your Lordship on the 16th instant a telegram reporting information furnished to me by the correspondent of the "Times" in this capital respecting the secret negotiations alleged to be in progress between France, Germany and Russia, for the purpose of taking advantage of the opportunity of the war in South Africa to exert pressure upon Her Majesty's Government to settle the principal outstanding questions between England and France.

M. de Blowitz being unable to see me that evening had sent up the information by Mr. Austen Lee; but he called upon me the next morning, and went more fully into the matter with me. . . .

As M. de Blowitz has upon more than one occasion recently been made the victim of a hoax, and has telegraphed to London sensational intelligence which has proved to be utterly unfounded, I naturally pressed him to tell me the sources of his information. He declined to give the name of his informant, but said that the latter was a politician of eminence, on intimate terms with M. Loubet, M. Waldeck-Rousseau, M. Delcassé and M. de Lanessan; and that the information came directly from those persons. . . .

In thanking M. de Blowitz for taking the trouble to come to me, I said that my opinion of the French Government was opposed to the idea that they would avail themselves of the existing situation to enter upon a line of policy which might bring about an European war; to which he replied that, as he had said before, the Nationalist party would either force their hands or turn them out of office upon this question; and that the scheme, as he understood it, did not contemplate the employment of any other measure at present than the exercise to its fullest extent of all the diplomatic pressure which England's occupation in South Africa would render more available than at any ordinary time.

With regard also to the co-operation of Germany and Russia, I told M. de Blowitz that I was not inclined to believe that the Emperor would consent to any overt hostile

action against England, although in the case of Germany I did think it possible that the gathering irrational and inexplicable excitement of the public might eventually overpower the resistance of the Emperor and the desire of his Government to maintain a correct attitude.

Two or three hours later I went to M. Delcassé's weekly reception, when his Excellency welcomed me with all his usual cordiality. In the course of half-an-hour's conversation I repeatedly gave him opportunities of making observations which would have indicated how far his thoughts were engaged in the negotiations alluded to by M. de Blowitz. I, of course, did not address him any direct question upon the subject; but his manner and his language were both of a character so friendly and straightforward that I could detect no symptom of his having entered into an international conspiracy against us; and my experience of M. Delcassé is that he is by no means so consummate an actor as to be able to conceal absolutely any sentiment which would naturally cause emotion.

Therefore, while thinking it my duty to report fully, and without loss of time, to your Lordship the details of the communication made to me by the "Times" correspondent, I feel that from all that I see and hear there is good reason to expect that unless under the influence of most urgent and forcible prompting from a foreign Power the Government of the Republic will not rashly precipitate a diplomatic situation which might well result in a rupture of European peace. Such a foreign Power could, in my opinion, only be Germany; for it is neither the desire of the Emperor Nicholas nor the traditional policy of Russia to co-operate in bringing about any such crisis. . . .

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 309.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Belgium 733.

(No. 18.) Confidential.

Brussels, D. January 21, 1900.

My Lord,

R. January 22, 1900.

In the course of a private conversation with Baron Lambertmont yesterday, I noticed that his Excellency now seems to be less positive than he was a week ago (as reported in my despatch No. 11 of the 14th instant) that there is no danger of foreign Powers taking advantage of England's present troubles in South Africa to damage her elsewhere.

His Excellency did not say much on the subject, but he was clearly painfully impressed by the harsh terms in which Count von Bülow had expressed himself in the German Parliament the day before with regard to the steamers which had been stopped by British cruisers.

His Excellency said that he believed no Government had ever anticipated the turn which events were taking in regard to South Africa. No very serious harm had, he thought, been yet done, but it was imperative that England should soon score some success; otherwise, in the course of a few weeks, the outlook for her in Europe or Asia might become serious. . . .

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 310.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1297.

(No. 28.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. February 2, 1900.

My Lord,

R. February 5, 1900.

I had some conversation yesterday with M. de Kállay on the general aspect of foreign affairs.

His Excellency, whom I had not seen for some time, began by saying that he was "in perfect despair" at the course taken by the war in South Africa. Looking beyond it, he foresaw still more serious events. The military experiments carried out by Russia in the direction of Afghanistan and her action in the matter of the loan to Persia portended evil. . . .

His Excellency spoke very strongly of the fatal disturbance that would be caused to a sound balance of power in the world by any weakening of Great Britain. He was well aware, he said, of the parliamentary exigencies which prevented Great Britain from contracting formal alliances, but it had hitherto always been felt that under given circumstances a British fleet at Salonica or at Besika Bay was a factor of the highest importance that might have to be reckoned with.

This uneasy apprehension of a possible decline in our power, among those who either wish us well or look to us for eventual support, seems to me a very striking feature of the situation. The detestable foreign press which magnifies our reverses, and croaks over the catastrophe in store for us, is mostly answerable for these impressions. The firm attitude of the nation and of its representatives in Parliament is, however, doing a good deal to counteract them.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 311.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1492.

(No. 34.) Secret.

Berlin, D. February 9, 1900.

My Lord,

R. February 12, 1900.

The Emperor sent me a message by telephone yesterday afternoon that he would call upon me at 7 o'clock. His Majesty arrived at the Embassy a few minutes after that time, and remained with me for upwards of an hour. His Majesty, after condoling with me on a personal loss which I have sustained in the war in South Africa in the person of a nephew, said that he wished to read to me some observations on the war which he had himself compiled and addressed to the Prince of Wales, to whom they had been delivered two days ago. They had been communicated to Count Metternich in order that he might be in possession of His Majesty's views in the event of his having to discuss the subject in London. It had been difficult to compile it on account of the scanty information furnished by the War Office and the conflicting accounts of newspaper correspondents, but His Majesty believed that it was fairly accurate, as he had given himself great pains to compare the different accounts of each action. It had, of course, been written before the news of to-day, which led to the hope that Sir Redvers Buller might succeed in the attempt to relieve Ladysmith.

His Majesty then proceeded to read in German the document, which he had headed "Aphorisms on the War in South Africa." . . .⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [The omitted passage is a summary of the text of the "Aphorisms," which are printed in full in *G.P.*, XV, 554-7, and in Sir Sidney Lee's *Life of King Edward VII* (1925), I, pp. 805-10.]

His Majesty laid considerable emphasis on the sentence that it would be the concern of a wise policy to avoid foreign complications during the time which would be necessary for the organisation of a general advance, and he criticised with some severity the interference of Sir Alfred Milner and Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson with purely military affairs. On my observing that I understood that a perfectly free hand had been left to the Generals in command, His Majesty replied that the occupation of Glencoe and Dundee at the beginning of the war, which had led to such unfortunate complications at Ladysmith, had been due to Sir Walter Hely-Hutchinson, and that Sir Alfred Milner had insisted on the attempt to relieve Ladysmith and Kimberley, and had thus prevented Sir Redvers Buller from carrying out his original plan of marching straight through the Orange Free State to Pretoria, which would have caused the Boers to raise the siege of both places.

We had, in fact, entered upon the war, which was as difficult as any war between two great nations could possibly be, as if it had been no more serious a matter than an expedition to dethrone King Thebaw or to knock the King of Coomassee off his stool. We had now learnt that this was a mistake and had realised that the original plan would have to be carried out, but time would be required before it could be undertaken, and the question therefore arose whether Her Majesty's Government could avoid the complications which might arise in the meantime.

The news from the Soudan was by no means reassuring; it seemed that the Egyptian troops were in a state of mutiny, and he could not help thinking that a mistake had been made in removing Lord Kitchener from the Soudan at so critical a time. Then there was the danger of a movement in Abyssinia which might be embarrassing to England, and he could tell me that both France and Russia had been urging King Menelek to take action against us and had sent large sums of money to Abyssinia for the purpose. It should also be remembered that the Abyssinians were now armed with Mauser rifles and Krupp guns, and would prove to be an enemy not to be despised.

His Majesty considered the Soudan as the point at which complications were most to be apprehended, but the situation in the Far East was far from satisfactory. Recent events in Peking had shown that the influence of Russia in China was increasing, and he had heard, on what he believed to be good authority, that Japan was mobilising her forces probably with a view to take action against Russia.

With regard to Persia, His Majesty did not seem to think the danger was so acute. Russia had given a loan to Persia, and would thereby, no doubt, obtain an increase of influence in the country, which might perhaps, later, become embarrassing for England, and which reminded him of the prompt manner in which Lord Beaconsfield's Government had purchased the Suez Canal shares.

His Majesty then told me of the message which he had sent to the King of Italy, about three weeks ago, to the effect that he would raise no objection to Italian troops being sent to Egypt if Her Majesty's Government should consider it necessary to send the English garrison to South Africa. He had felt that the King of Italy would be placed in a position of some embarrassment if the suggestion were made to him by Her Majesty's Government. He would naturally wish to comply with it, but at the same time he was a member of the Triple Alliance, and would necessarily have to consult his allies with regard to his military undertakings.

It was with a view of relieving the King of Italy's mind that the Emperor had sent his message through Count Lanza. His Majesty had studied the Mediterranean question and thoroughly understood how essential it was for Italy to be on good terms with England, partly on account of the gratitude which she owed her, and the sympathy which existed between the two countries, and partly on account of the dependence of Italy on the protection which the English fleet would accord her in the event of a serious difficulty with France. His Majesty, therefore, had at once sent his message to the King of Italy, although he was aware at the time that it would not meet with the approval of public opinion in Germany.

I thanked His Majesty warmly for this communication, which I would at once

telegraph to your Lordship, who, I was convinced, would regard it in the light of a friendly action, not only to the King of Italy, but also to Her Majesty's Government.

"Yes," said His Majesty, "it was intended as such, and I wished to tell you of it at the time, but then you were still being naughty about my ships, and I could not come to see you."

This gave me the opportunity of observing that it had always seemed to me that the outcry in Germany against the seizure of German ships had been exaggerated and somewhat unfair. The naval authorities had dealt with British ships in exactly the same manner, and I believed that the protests of some British ship-owners had been almost as vehement as those of the German Government itself.

The Emperor replied that the manner in which we treated our own ships was a minor question. That was a family matter which we could settle between ourselves, but we always seemed to forget that the German Empire was a young State which could not stand being kicked. What had been his own experience? He had constantly striven to promote the most cordial relations between our two countries, and just when his endeavours seemed to be crowned with success, he had received a kick on the shins which had upset all his endeavours. In the spring of last year matters had appeared to have been placed on a satisfactory footing, but then came the miserable Samoan business, which undid all the good which had been done. Then again in the autumn he had paid his visit to the Queen in spite of the opposition which had been raised. He had, however, "faced the music," and his reception in England had caused an excellent impression in Germany, but then came the seizure of the German ships, which had irritated German public opinion to the utmost.

I ventured here to interrupt His Majesty with the observation that that fact had been fully impressed upon my mind.

The Emperor laughed, and was good enough to say that he was aware of my efforts to put the German point of view before your Lordship, but he did not understand the policy of Her Majesty's Government in administering these rebuffs. He was not, however, discouraged, and he would still continue to endeavour to bring about a good understanding between the two countries. I had no doubt observed an improvement in the tone of the press. This was due to his own exertions, as well as those of M. de Bülow, who had had the excellent idea of publishing extracts from Prince Bismarck's speeches (see my despatch No. 30 of the 6th instant), which showed the value which the old Chancellor attached to the maintenance of good relations with England. His Majesty believed that this publication had done much to modify the tone of the press, although he thought that if the old Prince had still been alive "there would have been a row before this." His Majesty then said that large sums of money were being spent by France, and more especially by Russia, with the object of influencing the German press. This gave me the opportunity of suggesting that perhaps Dr. Leyds had also been instrumental in that direction. His Majesty replied that he had seen Dr. Leyds once in his life, shortly after the Jameson raid—about which His Majesty had expressed an opinion, for which he had been greatly blamed in England at the time, but which had since been endorsed by every English statesman, to whichever party he might belong, who had spoken on the subject. He believed that Dr. Leyds was leaving Berlin that evening, but even if he remained in Berlin, His Majesty had no intention of receiving him. The improvement in the tone of the press led His Majesty to hope that, unless some further incident arose to irritate German public opinion, matters might soon be placed on a satisfactory footing.

I replied that I trusted that this might be the case, but that Count Bülow had spoken to me somewhat seriously about a proposal which had been submitted to Her Majesty's Government to levy a tax on beet-root sugar.

His Majesty at first thought that I referred to the abolition of bounties, which the German Government desired to effect, and to which the German sugar-growers would agree under certain conditions. He had, indeed, had a conversation with Mr. Chamberlain on the subject at Windsor, and was convinced that the question

could be settled without much difficulty; but when I observed that I believed that Count Bülow had referred, not to the question of bounties, but to the possibility of a tax upon beet-root sugar, which appeared to me to be a perfectly legitimate object of taxation, His Majesty said that if we did, he should look upon us as hopeless. Such a measure would be looked upon in Germany as directed exclusively against German commerce, as although there were other beet-root-growing countries, England received about three-quarters of her consumption of sugar from Germany.

On my asking His Majesty what objects he thought we might tax without offending Germany, His Majesty assumed a jocular tone and replied, "Oh! put £1 upon the income tax and tax golf, but I will tell you what I will do. If you tax German sugar, I will send a Prussian army corps to Herat, and with that parting blessing I will leave you, and go and dine with Bülow, whom I have already kept waiting, and I will tell him that I have been pitching into you."

I have since heard from Baron Richthofen, who was one of Count Bülow's guests last night, that the Emperor, who kept the company waiting for nearly half-an-hour, was in most excellent spirits. He did not mention the war or the Naval Bill, in both which subjects he is intensely interested, and indulged in animated conversation till some time past midnight on the education of children and the works of Mark Twain and Bret Harte.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 312.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Africa 346.

(No. 39.) Africa. Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. February 10, 1900.

R. February 12, 1900.

I called, by appointment, this morning upon M. de Bülow, who, after assuring me, as reported in my telegram No. 15, of this series, of this day's date, that the German authorities in South-West Africa would do their utmost to prevent a raid by Boers from German territory into Wallfisch Bay, referred to the visit which the Emperor had paid me on the evening of the 8th instant, of which His Majesty had given him an account. He considered that His Majesty had perhaps over-estimated the danger to England of the events in the Soudan leading to hostile action on the part of Abyssinia. The report also that Japan was mobilising her forces had not been confirmed. The important part of the conversation in his Excellency's opinion was the communication to me by the Emperor of his message to the King of Italy. Even here his Excellency thought that His Majesty had jumped too hastily at a conclusion. He did not think it probable that the English garrison would be withdrawn from Egypt, or that Her Majesty's Government would suggest its being replaced by Italian troops. Nor did he think it likely that Italy would be inclined to undertake the task. But, however this might be, the fact that His Majesty had communicated to me his message to the King of Italy was a proof of His Majesty's friendliness towards both England and Italy.

I replied that I had understood it in that sense, and that I had now been instructed by your Lordship to convey your respectful thanks to His Majesty for the kindly interest he had shown, and your warm appreciation of His Majesty's attempts to promote cordial relations between the two countries, and that your Lordship would do all in your power towards that end.

Count Bülow said he would lose no time in informing His Majesty of the contents of your Lordship's telegram. It would be all the greater satisfaction to him to do so, as it would not only cause pleasure to His Majesty, but would enable his Excellency to point out that he had been right in combating an idea which the Emperor had

entertained, that your Lordship was hostile to Germany. He had always assured His Majesty that during the negotiations occasioned by the seizure of the German ships your Lordship's attitude had been friendly to Germany, and that the delay in the release of the ships was in no way attributable to your Lordship's action. He was greatly pleased therefore to have this further opportunity of conveying to His Majesty the proof of your Lordship's friendly sentiments.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 313.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1492.

(No. 57.) Secret.

Berlin, D. March 2, 1900.

My Lord,

R. March 5, 1900.

I had an opportunity yesterday of conversing with the German Emperor, who was present in person at the christening of the infant son of Prince and Princess Henry of Pless, at which ceremony I had the honour of representing His Royal Highness the Prince of Wales.

His Majesty was most gracious to me, and expressed great satisfaction at hearing of the relief of Ladysmith, the news of which had just reached me before I left the Embassy. His Majesty said that the recent reports from Sir Redvers Buller had led him to look forward to the speedy relief of Ladysmith, and he was glad to hear that it had been effected, more especially as it would remove the anxiety which the Queen must recently have felt. His Majesty hoped that our recent successes might enable us to bring the war to a speedy and satisfactory termination, and would allow Her Majesty's Government to consider other questions which in ordinary circumstances would have attracted their serious attention. He also most sincerely hoped that our recent successes might not blind us to the necessity of a complete reform of our military system. He understood the difficulty of introducing anything in the nature of universal service in England, and he was occupying himself with a scheme for the reorganisation of the British army. The least that was required was that there should always be two complete army corps in England ready for immediate service, and we should require at least an equal amount for service in South Africa. "Aldershot," His Majesty remarked, "is not enough for you. You want another Aldershot in South Africa."

The Emperor wished to point out to me, what I had no doubt observed myself, that the news of a British success was accompanied by a rise on the Berlin money market, whereas a reverse brought about a fall in the funds, and this proved that at all events the commercial and financial classes have no desire to see England weakened. I replied that I was fully convinced that the interests of both countries required that they should live on friendly terms, that I felt sure that in the course of time a better feeling would be created and the anti-English feeling in Germany would gradually subside. In fact, I had noticed that lately some of the newspapers had adopted a much fairer tone.

The Emperor replied that this was so, in spite of the great amount of roubles and francs which had been lavished on the press, and His Majesty considered that Count von Buelow deserved great credit in his very difficult task of improving the tone of the press.

As regards himself, His Majesty had passed a hard winter in fighting against anti-English sentiments, and against the incitements, even in his immediate *entourage*, to intervene in the war. I had no doubt seen in the foreign press the arguments which had been put forward to induce him to take the initiative in intervening to put an end to the war.

I ventured to interrupt His Majesty by observing that I had gathered that the press of those countries which had demanded intervention had suggested that the initiative should be taken by some other country than their own.

His Majesty said that they all wanted him to take the task upon himself, which he had not the slightest intention of doing. He made politics with his head and not with his heart, and although he had had much to suffer from the attacks of the English press both on himself and on Germany in general, he would certainly take no action which would embarrass Her Majesty's Government, and he took great credit to himself for having prevented any hostile action on the part of France or Russia which any encouragement on his part would easily have produced. He thought it was only fair that it should be known and recognised in England that his action had influenced the conduct of France and Russia, or, as His Majesty expressed it, "that I have kept those two tigers quiet."

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 314.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

Berlin, March 16, 1900.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1496.

D. 5.25 P.M.

Tel. (No. 6.) Secret.

R. 5.45 P.M.

Following is a paraphrase of a telegram just received from Emperor at Kiel.

"The tone of recent article in the 'Times' exceeds all bounds and after insulting us they have gone so far as to publish a report that crew of my brother's flagship on their departure from Portsmouth had *cheered the Boers*. I have had matter investigated at once and have ascertained that our men were escorted to their boats by your bluejackets, who gave them three farewell cheers, to which our sailors cordially responded. The report is consequently an *arrant lie*. It is a matter of great regret that in reply to hard work which I have undertaken at home the English press should have inoculated their pens with fresh venom against Germany. Disaster may come of it if this is not stopped at once."

I have replied that I have forwarded His Majesty's telegram to your Lordship, who I do not doubt will deplore the tone of the 'Times' as deeply as I do, but that I understood your Lordship had already explained to Count Metternich that Her Majesty's Government exercise no sort of control over the 'Times,' and I ventured to observe that it would be a matter of some difficulty for Her Majesty's Government to attempt at a moment of great national excitement to influence the press without running the risk of increasing their violence.

No. 315.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.⁽¹⁾

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1492.

(No. 73.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. March 17, 1900.

My Lord,

R. March 19, 1900.

With reference to my telegram No. 5 of the 11th instant, I have the honour to report that the Austro-Hungarian Ambassador informed me yesterday that the reply

⁽¹⁾ [On the 5th March, 1900, the Presidents of the South African and Orange Free State Republics offered to treat for peace on the basis of the independence of both Republics as sovereign international States. These conditions were declined by Lord Salisbury on the 11th March.]

of his Government to the application of the Presidents of the two South African Republics was exactly similar to that of the German Government, viz., that the Austro-Hungarian Government would be ready to co-operate by friendly intervention, if the essential condition that both belligerents desired their intervention were accepted. As, however, Great Britain had declined to accept the intervention of any third Power, the Austro-Hungarian Government were unable to take any further steps in the matter.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 316.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1496.

Tel. (No. 12.)

Foreign Office, March 18, 1900.

Your telegram No. 6, Secret, of 16th March.

I approve your language to the Emperor which if necessary you can repeat from me. The incidents referred to are most unfortunate but the vagaries of the newspapers are entirely beyond my control.

No. 317.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Salisbury.

(No. 75.) Confidential.⁽¹⁾

St. Petersburg, D. March 19, 1900.

My Lord,

R. March 26, 1900.

I learn from several of my colleagues that at Count Mouravieff's weekly reception last Wednesday they were sounded severally by his Excellency as to the action, if any, which their Governments proposed to take on the appeal made to their consuls at Pretoria by the Presidents of the South African Republics.

Count Mouravieff, while apparently anxious to be understood as desiring to take a lead in proposing any common action, expressed, I understand, an opinion that if the Governments appealed to were disposed to offer their good offices in the cause of peace, they should do so concurrently in the form of identic notes, and not take action singly.

Count Mouravieff must have been aware, at the time of these conversations with my colleagues, of the exact nature of the reply which your Lordship had returned to the direct communication received from the two Presidents. He appears to have argued that as there would naturally be no reference to any conditions of peace in any communication of a simple offer of good offices or mediation, no humiliation could possibly be incurred by the Governments if, as was possible, it were, declined by Her Majesty's Government; the neutral Governments would, however, have had the satisfaction of having done their duty.

I gathered from my informants that some of the foreign Representatives expressed an opinion that their Governments would hesitate to take any action on the appeal of the Presidents, as Her Majesty's Government regarded the present war as an internal one exclusively concerning the British Empire.

The Austrian Ambassador was able to explain to Count Mouravieff that his Government, however anxious to assist in promoting the cause of peace, did not

⁽¹⁾ [The original of this despatch cannot be traced. The text given here is a reprint from the *Confidential Print*.]

consider that they could make an offer of good offices, without being satisfied beforehand that it was desired by both belligerents.

My American colleague was good enough to confide to me his view of Count Mouravieff's intention.

His Excellency, he said, was at pains to impress upon him that Russia did not desire to take any initiative in suggesting a collective offer of mediation, but would gladly join other Powers in doing so, and thought that this would be preferable to any one Government taking an independent action on the appeal of the Presidents.

He was equally anxious that Mr. Tower should not imagine that he desired to suggest anything which would have the appearance of pressure upon England to accept their good offices, because it was clear that no Government would take any further action if they were declined.

Mr. Tower said that Count Mouravieff has evidently been much disappointed since learning from him that the United States' Government, before they had had time to learn his views, had on their own account made a friendly communication to Her Majesty's Government on the subject of the appeal of the two Presidents, and had received a friendly reply, indicating in clear and firm language the impossibility of admitting any foreign intervention of the kind suggested.

My American colleague said to me that he felt sure that Her Majesty's Government would not have misunderstood this step on the part of his Government. He regarded it himself as clearly undertaken in our interest, as your Lordship's reply had evidently satisfied Count Mouravieff that it would be useless to proceed any further with his suggestion of identic representations, and that he had dropped the idea altogether.

I learn from another of my colleagues that Count Mouravieff has been evidently sounding M. Delcassé on the subject, and has not received much encouragement from Paris.

To the Danish Minister he remarked that Denmark and Greece appeared to be the only countries where public opinion was not entirely on the side of the Boers.

As Count Mouravieff has not made any allusion in conversation with me to the appeal of the Presidents, and as I have avoided, as far as possible, any reference to the war in South Africa in my conversations with him, regarding it as a matter in which Russia can have no direct interest, I am unable to explain from personal enquiry the interest which he has taken in provoking an exchange of opinions with other Governments on the subject of an offer of mediation.

My colleagues seem uncertain whether he was acting under orders from the Emperor, or simply actuated by a desire to give some satisfaction to popular opinion in Russia, which is strongly in favour of international intervention in some form on behalf of the Boers, and dissatisfied with the attitude hitherto maintained by the Russian Foreign Office on this question.

I have, &c.

CHARLES S. SCOTT.

No. 318.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1297.

(No. 66.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. March 27, 1900.

R. April 3, 1900.

I had the honour of a private audience of the Emperor yesterday at which I had an opportunity of delivering the messages with which the Queen was recently pleased to charge me for His Imperial Majesty. . . .

After some further remarks proving what I might almost term the engrossing interest His Majesty takes in the war, the Emperor emphatically stated his hope that

one of its most valuable results may be a thorough reform and extension of our military organisation. In this I may incidentally remark His Majesty only shares the views of all our well-wishers in this country of whom there is a much greater number than the utterances of an ill-informed and misguided Press would allow to appear.

This leads me to mention that the Emperor touched upon the feelings of animosity against us which have been so generally manifested on the Continent. His Majesty much regretted their having been shared to a great extent in this country, though they were less marked here than in France or in Germany. Why, in Saxony, for instance, said the Emperor, the King was absolutely alone on the side of England. I replied that all through Germany the tendency seemed to be extremely hostile and, in fact dangerously so. The Emperor William was, of course, aware of this, and fortunately appeared anxious to check the Anglophobe movement.

The friendliness and cordiality towards England which the Emperor Francis Joseph exhibited throughout the interview with which he was pleased to honour me were in the highest degree gratifying.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 319.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1493.

(No. 109.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. April 20, 1900.

R. April 23, 1900.

On the 17th instant the Emperor honoured Her Majesty's Embassy by his presence at dinner at 7 o'clock, and remained till past 11.30. His Majesty was most gracious and amiable, and although his conversation as a rule was of a general character, he made some allusions of a political character. He regretted the delay which had taken place in the payment of the compensation of the German ships which had been captured during the course of the present war, a delay which was all the more unfortunate, as it would tend to alienate the sympathies of such places as Bremen and Hamburg, where public opinion had hitherto been favourable to England. . . .

The only other point of political interest on which His Majesty touched was his fear, which he has more than once expressed to me before, that your Lordship's sympathies for France, as proved by your recent civilities to M. Delcassé, might lead Her Majesty's Government to abandon their traditional Mediterranean policy, which would be a disaster for Europe. If England were to retire from the Mediterranean and Russia were to take her place, the whole situation in Europe would be changed. Italy would be at the mercy of France, Austria would be seriously threatened, and the position of Germany would force her to seek other arrangements. His Majesty could only hope that he might receive timely warning if such a change of policy were contemplated by Her Majesty's Government.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 320.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1491.

(No. 90.) Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, April 25, 1900.

I have read with much interest, and have laid before the Queen your Excellency's despatch No. 109, Very Confidential, of the 20th instant, reporting observations made to you by the German Emperor on the occasion of his honouring Her Majesty's Embassy with his presence at dinner on the 17th instant.

I should wish you to take the first opportunity of offering to his Imperial Majesty my respectful thanks for the warm and friendly interest which he is good enough to take in the progress of the campaign in South Africa, and in the maintenance of good relations between our two countries.

I have been rather at a loss to understand what His Majesty can have had in his mind when he alluded to my recent civilities to M. Delcassé. I have appreciated the friendly and moderate tone of M. Delcassé's speeches, but I am not aware that I have made any communications to him of late beyond a message of thanks for the rather exceptional honours paid by the authorities in Algiers to the remains of the late Field-Marshal Sir Donald Stewart.

Your Excellency may in any case assure the Emperor that Her Majesty's Government have not changed, and have no intention of changing, their policy in regard to the Mediterranean.

I am, &c.

SALISBURY.

No. 321.

Memorandum by Lieutenant-Colonel W. H. H. Waters.

(Enclosure in Sir F. Lascelles' Despatch No. 241.)

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1494.

(Secret.)

His Excellency Sir Frank Lascelles.

Berlin, D. September 3, 1900.

On the 1st September at the Palace, Vice-Admiral von Senden-Bibran, the Chief of the Emperor's Naval Cabinet, asked me whether I would like to know the reply which the Emperor of Russia made to Dr. Leyds' wish for intervention in South Africa.

I replied that information from such a well-informed source would greatly interest me.

The Admiral then told me that the Emperor of Russia stated to Dr. Leyds that both on financial and on political grounds Russia could not interfere with England in South Africa. . . .⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [Details as to Count Waldersee's mission.]

No. 322.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1520.

(No. 48.) Secret and Confidential.

Cronberg, D. February 28, 1901.

My Lord,

R. March 4, 1901.

With reference to my preceding despatch of this day's date, I have the honour to report that, in consequence of the King's presence at Friedrichshof, I have had three opportunities of conversing at considerable length with the German Emperor. . . .⁽¹⁾

⁽¹⁾ [Details as to press.]

His Majesty expressed his great satisfaction with the conversations he had had, during his recent visit to England, with your Lordship, Lord Salisbury and Mr. Brodrick. He had conversed with the last-named Statesman on military matters, and more especially with regard to a new gun for the Artillery which he had recommended should be supplied by Messrs. Krupp. This of course could not be done as long as the War in South Africa continued, as it would be a breach of neutrality, but it was to be hoped that the war would now soon be brought to an end, and he had already given orders to Messrs. Krupp to supply His Majesty's Government with the very best material at their disposal as soon as they should be able to do so without committing a breach of neutrality. . . .

In speaking of his desire to maintain the most friendly relations with England, His Majesty said, "You must understand that all you have to do is to keep me in good humour, the rest does not signify, but you must not annoy me by levying customs duties on German goods." I replied that I thought the danger was the other way. I was aware that a new German Tariff was being prepared, probably with the object of enabling the German Government to make some apparent concessions in their negotiations for commercial Treaties two years hence, and I could inform His Majesty that the Chambers of Commerce in England had been thrown into a state of alarm by a report that it was contemplated to increase the duty on steel. His Majesty said that he had heard nothing of this, but would make enquiries.

His Majesty spoke at considerable length, and with great eloquence, of the necessity of the Teutonic Nations holding together, in view of the probable, if not inevitable, conflict between them and the Slav nations. It was of the utmost importance that they should take every possible precaution, and for this purpose his policy was to induce France to withdraw from the Russian Alliance. This would take time, but was not impossible. The French were beginning to be dissatisfied at being called upon to support the separate arrangements which Russia was making with China, and at not being allowed to make arrangements in their own interests. They were also alarmed on account of the vast amount of money which they had advanced to Russia, and had declined to afford her any further pecuniary assistance. No doubt, the memory of Alsace-Lorraine was still alive, but that was now a page of ancient history, and the Franco-Russian alliance had become so weakened that His Majesty was not without hope that, when the conflict between the Teutons and Slavs broke out, France would not be found on the side of the latter.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 323.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1521.

(No. 206.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Homburg, D. August 25, 1901.

R. August 30, 1901.

On the 23rd instant the King paid a visit to the German Emperor at Wilhelmshöhe and was graciously pleased to include me in his suite. . . .

After luncheon Their Majesties spent some time with the Empress and Royal Children, and then strolled to a shady seat in the grounds where they had a most interesting political conversation in which I was privileged to take part.

The King began by expressing his earnest hope for the maintenance of cordial relations with Germany, for whose Sovereign he entertained so strong and sincere an affection. The Emperor entirely reciprocated these sentiments, and said that he was

glad that there was no danger at present of any European complications as all the Nations, including Russia and France, were convinced that their true interests lay in the development of their trade and commerce. On my venturing to observe that even this might give rise to some difficulties as neither Russia nor France were in a position to compete commercially with England or Germany, His Majesty replied that although this was certainly the case there was no danger of either of them disturbing the peace. The Emperor of Russia was most certainly peacefully disposed. He was about to pay him a visit at Danzig and had expressed a wish that the German Chancellor should be present on the occasion. His Majesty therefore supposed that there would be some political conversation although he did not know whether His Imperial Majesty would be accompanied. His Majesty saw no objection to the Emperor of Russia's going to France and did not grudge the French the pleasure of the Imperial visit. He hoped even that it might strengthen the position of the present Government, which was the best that had existed in France for many years, and whose continuance in office was a further guarantee of peace. His Majesty did not attribute much importance to the report that the French Ambassador at Constantinople had broken off relations with the Porte, and believed that matters would soon resume their normal course. . . .⁽¹⁾

His Majesty went on to say that it seemed that England was so anxious to retain the goodwill of the Americans that she had been led to neglect her own interests in the Pacific, and he entirely failed to understand why His Majesty's Government threw over Japan at a moment when she was looking most anxiously for our support. His Majesty's Government must surely realise that Japan was a most important factor in the Pacific, and one with whom it was essential that His Majesty's Government should remain on the best of terms. Their action therefore with regard to Japan appeared inexplicable.

As it was evident that the Emperor was under the impression that Japan had been badly treated by His Majesty's Government, I said, against the risk of being indiscreet, that not only had His Majesty's Government the earnest desire of being on the best terms with Japan, but had even offered her pecuniary assistance, which however had been refused, and had given rise to the suspicion that she might have come to terms with Russia. The Emperor replied that he had ascertained from His Ambassador at St. Petersburg that the Russian Government had been under no apprehension as to the possible action of Japan, as they had been assured that His Majesty's Government had declined to afford her financial assistance, and she was too poor to go to war, and this information had been confirmed by the German Legation at Tokio, who had reported that the Japanese had been grievously disappointed at the want of support they had received from His Majesty's Government, who they considered had left them in the lurch at a critical moment. I asked His Majesty if he could give me the date on which he received this information which I could not help thinking was founded on some misunderstanding, but His Majesty did not remember the exact date, which I presume must have been about the time when the Russians were pressing the Chinese to sign the Manchurian Agreement. I told His Majesty that I would not fail to report to your Lordship what he had told me, and repeated that I could not help thinking that there must have been some considerable misunderstanding on the subject.

As the conversation drew to its close, I observed that I was glad to see from the reply, which the Emperor had sent to the observations contained in your Lordship's Memorandum which the King had handed to His Majesty, that the questions under discussion between the two Governments were not likely to lead to any serious difference of opinion, although the insistence with which the German Government supported the claims of the German shareholders in the South African Railway appeared to me to be somewhat excessive. The Emperor considered that the shareholders were certainly entitled to receive their money in full, and declined to admit my suggestion that the holders of a speculative investment should suffer for the sins

⁽¹⁾ [For passage here omitted see Vol. II, No. 90, p. 73.]

of their Directors. I added that His Majesty's Government were determined that the shares which formerly belonged to the Government of the South African Republic should not be paid for, and as these shares had now been thrown upon the market and could not be traced it was essential that the German shareholders should prove the *bona fides* of their purchases before they could be considered as entitled to compensation.

The whole conversation was marked by the freedom of speech and cordiality of manner with which His Majesty has so frequently honoured me in my intercourse with him.

I venture to think that the King's visit to the Emperor so shortly after he had been His Majesty's guest at Potsdam, has produced a most excellent impression upon the Emperor who certainly highly appreciated His Majesty's friendly action, and I am strongly of opinion, which I did not conceal from either of the two Sovereigns, that apart from the satisfaction which must be caused by the existence of such friendly feelings between such near relatives, the free and, I hope, constant interchange of views between the two most important Personages in the world cannot fail to be of the greatest value to their two countries.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 324.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1522.

(No. 265.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. November 9, 1901.

My Lord,

R. November 12, 1901.

The Emperor gave a banquet this afternoon at the Neues Palais in honour of the King's birthday, to which all the members of His Majesty's Embassy at present at Berlin had the honour of being invited.

His Majesty's language was marked by his usual cordiality to me personally and by the severe criticisms of the action of His Majesty's Government to which he has accustomed me for the last two years. They had missed their opportunities of finishing the war in South Africa, which they might have done on honourable terms on two occasions, first, after the surrender of Cronje, and second, at the moment of the Queen's death. The war, however, was still dragging on, and the army, in which he took so great an interest, was being sacrificed to the interest of politicians.

On my asking whether he had any orders for me as I was about to leave for England, His Majesty replied in the negative. It was useless for him to make suggestions which were disregarded, and he was not going to "stick to us" any longer. I ventured to ask to whom His Majesty proposed to "stick" now, and he promptly replied "to myself." "What you want now," said His Majesty, "is a man, and it is a pity that Disraeli is not still alive." On my expressing a doubt as to whether Lord Beaconsfield would have been more successful than His Majesty's present advisers, and asking whether His Majesty would prefer the methods of Lord Palmerston, His Majesty replied with an emphatic negative, but on my mentioning the name of Pitt, he said "Ah! that would have been the man for you now."

On the return journey he⁽¹⁾ attempted to mitigate the Emperor's language, of which he had heard the whole. His Majesty was a soldier and had little liking for parliamentary institutions and civilian Ministers, and he was especially irritated by the idea that the army was being sacrificed to the politicians, whom he held in little

(¹) Count Bülow.

esteem. There could, however, be no doubt that His Majesty sincerely desired that England should be in no way weakened, and that he regretted that the continuance of the war in South Africa hampered her freedom of action in other parts of the world. His Excellency added that he had felt some anxiety when I had replied to the Emperor by asking to whom he intended to "stick" lest His Majesty should take offence.

I replied that the Emperor had always spoken to me in the plainest language and had allowed me to reply equally plainly. It was possible that some day His Majesty might take offence at what I said and that I might fall into disgrace with him, in which case any usefulness I might have as His Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin would come to an end.

Count Bülow said that I might be assured that there was no danger on that score. His Majesty had an affection for me and would certainly not take offence at anything I might say although he might not agree with me. His Excellency then went on to speak of the anti-English feeling in Germany. There was no doubt that German public opinion was strongly in favour of the Boers to the extent, he should say, of 99 per cent. of the population. This, however, was purely sentimental and did not imply hostility to England, and although public opinion in Germany did not influence *the action* of the Government as in England, he was convinced that, if a poll were taken, to decide whether measures should be taken which might lead to an estrangement with England, 99 per cent. of the population would answer in the negative.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 325.

Mr. Buchanan to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Africa 497.

(No. 127.) Africa. Confidential.

Berlin, D. November 20, 1901.

My Lord,

R. November 25, 1901.

With reference to my despatch No. 126, Africa, of the 15th instant, I have the honour to report that in the course of a conversation which I had with the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs yesterday, I asked whether he could tell me anything with regard to Dr. Leyds' visit to Berlin, as I had seen in one of the morning papers that that gentleman had informed a reporter that he had been "in touch with official circles" during his stay here.

Herr von Mühlberg at once replied that so far from this being the case, Dr. Leyds had not even left his card at the Foreign Office, and that a contradiction of the statement attributed to him would be published. Dr. Leyds' object in coming to Berlin was, he imagined, to organise, and probably to finance the pro-Boer campaign at present being carried on in the press; and he would tell me, confidentially, that the Government had reason to believe that many of the violent anti-English articles that had recently appeared had been both inspired and paid for by him. They knew as a fact that one French journal had received a very considerable sum for placing its columns at his disposal, and they believed, though it was difficult to obtain absolute proof of it, that more than one German newspaper was in his pay. The Government, he added, were doing all they could to moderate the language of the press, and I would, no doubt, have noticed the difference in tone between those papers which were more or less in touch with the Government, and those which did not seek inspiration from official quarters. It was, however, unfortunately a fact that, while the circulation of the latter class of journals was increasing, that of the former was falling off. This was the case with the "*Koelnische Zeitung*," many of whose regular readers had deserted it for the pro-Boer "*Koelnische Volks-Zeitung*."

I said that I had read with much pleasure a recent article in the "National Zeitung" warning Dr. Leyds' pan-Germanic supporters of the folly of encouraging the Boers in their resistance by inspiring false hopes of eventual intervention, as well as one in the "Koelnische Zeitung" exploding the fables that had been circulated respecting the conduct of our troops.

Herr von Mühlberg then turned the conversation to the subject of Mr. Chamberlain's recent speech, and said that he would not conceal from me the fact that the Government had been painfully surprised by the reference which it contained to the conduct of the German army in the war of 1870.

I replied that I was sorry that the speech had made so unfavourable an impression in Germany, but that I was at a loss to understand how Mr. Chamberlain's words could possibly be interpreted as an insult ("Beleidigung") to the German army. The meaning which they conveyed to my mind was that war can in no case be waged with rose water, and that, if we were obliged to have recourse to severer measures than we had hitherto adopted, in order to bring the present guerilla warfare to a conclusion, we should only be doing what other nations, such as the Austrians and Germans had been obliged to do before us.

Herr von Mühlberg, however, declined to view the matter in the same light. The Liberation war at the beginning of last century and the Franco-German war which had welded the German States into a united nation, were, he said, regarded by all Germans with feelings akin to reverence, and it could not but be painful to them to have the conduct of the war of 1870 quoted side by side with that of wars waged in Poland, the Caucasus, Tonquin, and Algeria, as a reason for justifying the severe measures which the British army might consider it necessary to take in South Africa. The speech had poured oil on the flames of the anti-English agitation in the press, and had greatly increased the difficulties of the Imperial Government.

I could only reply that I was convinced that Mr. Chamberlain had never intended to cast the slightest slur on the German army, and had only wished to show that, in the majority of wars, cases arose when severe measures of repression had to be resorted to.

I should mention that it is generally expected that several interpellations will be addressed to the Government on this subject, when the Reichstag meets on the 26th instant, with the view of inducing them to lodge a formal protest against this so-called attack on the German army, and it is possible that Herr von Mühlberg may have wished to prepare me for a repudiation by Count Bülow of the language used by Mr. Chamberlain.

I have, &c.

GEORGE W. BUCHANAN.

No. 326.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Buchanan.

F.O. Africa 496.

(No. 214.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 26, 1901.

The German Ambassador again referred to-day to the effect which had been produced in Germany by the speech which Mr. Chamberlain delivered at Edinburgh on the 25th ultimo.

He said it had greatly exacerbated the pro-Boer feeling which already existed in that country, and which the German Government had desired to moderate. He did not suggest that Mr. Chamberlain had had any intention of giving offence, but his words had been universally interpreted as involving reflection on the conduct of the German army, and Count Bülow, if interpellated in the Reichstag, would be compelled to take up their defence.

I told Count Metternich that I remained of the opinion which I had expressed to him on a previous occasion, namely, that the interpretation placed upon Mr. Chamberlain's words was one which they did not properly bear. The effect of his observations was merely this, that should we be driven, as we might be, to resort to stronger measures in South Africa, we should still be acting in accordance with the practice of civilised nations, as illustrated in the campaigns which Mr. Chamberlain specially mentioned in the passage to which so much exception was taken.

I told Count Metternich that he must not forget that the most odious accusations had been made against the conduct of our troops by pro-Boer journals in Germany. He could not expect us to allow these charges to pass by in silence. I added that I was convinced that those who attacked Mr. Chamberlain so bitterly proceeded upon the assumption that our troops had in fact already committed atrocities in South Africa, and that, using this as their point of departure, they had convinced themselves that Mr. Chamberlain had accused the German army of committing even worse outrages.

I noticed with pleasure his Excellency's remark to the effect that he was himself satisfied that no offence was intended by Mr. Chamberlain. I was able to say without hesitation that this was the case.

I then told his Excellency that if the matter really seemed to him of such importance as to make it desirable to pursue it further, it would be well that he should supply me with a written statement of the reasons for which Mr. Chamberlain's observations were held by the German Government to be a matter of complaint. I would then undertake to put before him also in writing a rejoinder in which I should be prepared to deal with whatever counts the indictment might be found to contain.

Count Metternich thanked me for the suggestion, but expressed his belief that the adoption of such a course might have the effect of leading to a prolongation of the controversy, a result which he thought we should both deprecate. He asked permission, however, to consider my suggestion.

When he was on the point of leaving the room he asked me, evidently referring to my statement that I knew Mr. Chamberlain had not intended to give offence, whether it would not be possible for that gentleman, by means of a public utterance of a communiqué to a newspaper, to make this fact known.

I replied that it seemed to me impossible for Mr. Chamberlain to adopt such a course without putting himself in the position of offering an apology for a speech which, in our opinion, did not call for one.

I had told his Excellency, speaking with full knowledge of the facts, that I was convinced that Mr. Chamberlain had had no such intention. To ask Mr. Chamberlain to offer such an explanation was, however, quite a different thing.

I am, &c.

LANSDOWNE.

No. 327.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Plunkett.

F.O. Africa 486.

(No. 21.) Africa.

Sir,

Foreign Office, November 26, 1901.

The Austrian Ambassador spoke to me to-day upon the subject of the effect which had been produced on the Continent by Mr. Chamberlain's Edinburgh speech.

His Excellency had referred to this subject during a conversation with me last week, and I then mentioned to him in outline the reply which I had made to Count Metternich's complaint.

Count Deym was good enough to tell me that, in his opinion, the interpretation which I had placed upon Mr. Chamberlain's remarks seemed to him perfectly

natural, and a sufficient answer to those who had taken him so severely to task. Mr. Chamberlain's words might possibly not have been very carefully chosen, but the denunciation of them seemed to him quite unreasonable. His Excellency told me that in Austria very little attention had been paid to the matter.

I am, &c.

LANSDOWNE.

No. 328.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Mr. Buchanan.

F.O. Africa 496.

(No. 220.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, December 3, 1901.

The German Ambassador referred to-day for the third time to the speech delivered by Mr. Chamberlain at Edinburgh (see my despatches No. 210 of the 19th November and No. 214 of the 26th November).

His Excellency told me that he had considered the suggestion which I had made to him on the occasion of our last interview, namely, that if he desired to pursue the subject further, he should supply me with a written statement of the complaints which the speech seemed to him to justify, and that I should thereupon furnish him in return with a rejoinder in which such complaints might be dealt with *seriatim* in such manner as might seem to us necessary.

His Excellency reminded me that he deprecated any action calculated to prolong the controversy, and he was glad to say that the excitement to which the speech had given rise in Germany was showing signs of subsiding. It was, however, by no means improbable that Count Bülow would be interrogated on the subject in the Reichstag, although no notice of such a question had as yet been given. In these circumstances, his Excellency asked me whether I would not agree to supply him with a statement merely to the effect that Mr. Chamberlain had not intended to give offence and that His Majesty's Government regretted the impression which had been created in Germany by the speech. Count Metternich explained to me that he offered this suggestion unofficially for my consideration, knowing, as he did, my desire to remove all cause for ill-will between the two countries.

I reminded his Excellency that I had already expressed to him my conviction that Mr. Chamberlain had not intended to give offence, and that no offence was, in fact, conveyed by his words. I had, within the last few days, made a similar statement in a speech which I had delivered at Darlington, and which had been reported in the newspapers.

I could not, however, agree to supply his Excellency with a statement of the kind he desired, for diplomatic use; if anything was to pass in writing between us, it must be on the lines which I had already indicated, viz., a formal indictment on one side, and an equally formal rejoinder on the other; but I could not accept the idea of a mere expression of regret unaccompanied by any attempt to discuss the merits of the case.

Count Metternich did not further press his proposal, but asked leave to recapitulate once more the grounds on which Mr. Chamberlain's speech seemed to the German Government open to criticism. He dwelt at some length on the pride with which the German people looked back to the Franco-Prussian war, and to the conduct of their troops throughout the campaign. During the guerilla warfare which was now proceeding in South Africa, it had been necessary for us to deal severely with the enemy, and what was so much resented in Germany was Mr. Chamberlain's suggestion that none of the measures to which we had been driven had "even approached" those to which the German army had resorted.

I repeated to his Excellency the explanation which I had already offered, and called his attention to the persistency with which it was assumed that our troops in South Africa, had, in fact, been guilty of great cruelty towards the Boers. I said that we altogether denied that our troops had been guilty of cruel conduct (his Excellency here signified his concurrence), and that being the case, Mr. Chamberlain's statement that we might hereafter find it necessary to have recourse to more severe measures, and yet remain well on the right side of the line which had been drawn for us by the practice of civilised nations during the campaigns to which he referred, could not fairly be regarded as an imputation upon the humanity of other armies.

I am, &c.

LANSDOWNE.

No. 329.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Africa 630.

(No. 8.) Africa. Confidential.

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 14, 1902.

I told Count Metternich to-day that we should, in all probability, be questioned in Parliament as to the assurances which Count Bülow stated that he had received with regard to Mr. Chamberlain's Edinburgh speech. I said that, if we were pressed upon the subject, it would be difficult for us to avoid presenting to Parliament the despatches in which I had given an account of my three conversations with him on the 19th and 26th November and the 3rd December.

I was, however, most anxious to be sure that I had not misrepresented what he had said to me, and I therefore begged him to be good enough to read the despatches in question, and to tell me whether he found in them anything which seemed to him calculated to convey an incorrect impression.

I then handed the above despatches to his Excellency, who read them carefully through in my presence.

The only passage to which he took any exception was that in my despatch No. 210, Africa, in which I stated that, so far as I was able to judge, he did not desire to treat the incident as one of serious importance.

I replied that I should have great pleasure in striking out this sentence.

His Excellency then went on to say that it would, in his opinion, be most unfortunate if these despatches were to be made public. He had spoken to me about Mr. Chamberlain's speech unofficially and without instructions from his Government to bring the matter before me. Such conversations ought, in his opinion, to be treated as strictly confidential.

I replied that, whatever weight I might feel disposed to give to this argument, it was impossible to treat these conversations as purely unofficial after they had been referred to by Count Bülow in a Ministerial statement to the Reichstag.

Count Metternich did not attempt to reply to this argument, but suggested that my object could be equally well attained by means of a statement in Parliament, explaining what had actually taken place, without the publication of documents.

I told Count Metternich that, to my mind, such a statement, made several weeks after the occurrence to which it had reference, would obviously carry much less weight than the evidence afforded by my cotemporary Reports, of which the accuracy was, I was glad to find, not disputed. I said, however, that, in deference to the strong views which he had expressed, I would consider the matter further, but that much would depend on what was said in Parliament or in the Reichstag. Our hands might be forced.

At the close of the conversation, Count Metternich said that it was his great desire that we should be able to discuss matters of this kind with absolute frankness and in the most confidential manner, and that, in his view, such communications would be rendered much more difficult hereafter if in this case confidential discussions were to be given to the public so soon after they had taken place.

I am, &c.
 LANSDOWNE.

No. 330.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1550.

(No. 18.)

Sir,

Foreign Office, January 14, 1902.

The German Ambassador informed me to-day that during his recent stay in Germany he had found nothing but good feeling towards this country amongst the high officials with whom he had been brought into contact, and even in unofficial society at such places as Bremen and Hamburg, which he had visited. He greatly regretted that there should be any irritation of public feeling on either side in consequence of the excitement created by Mr. Chamberlain's speech. . . .

His Excellency stated that he observed that the arrangements for the Prince of Wales' visit to Germany were approaching completion. I said that His Royal Highness's visit was of a family, rather than of a political, character, and that the matter was therefore being dealt with by His Majesty the King and the Emperor. I was not able to say what might be decided with regard to the Royal visit, but it seemed to me within the bounds of possibility that, owing to the condition of public opinion in Germany, there might be some risk of regrettable incidents if the visit were to take place at the time proposed. Count Metternich expressed his conviction that there was no likelihood of such incidents happening: he trusted, therefore, that the visit might not be abandoned.

I am, &c.
 LANSDOWNE.

No. 331.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Africa 631.

(No. 12.) Very Confidential.

Berlin, D. January 16, 1902.

My Lord,

R. January 20, 1902.

On the 12th instant I had the honour of receiving an invitation to luncheon at the Neues Palais, in which the ladies of my family were also included.

As I had so recently as the 28th ultimo had the honour of receiving a similar invitation, I could not but regard His Majesty's commands as a special mark of Imperial favour.

The ostensible reason for the honour thus conferred upon me was His Majesty's desire to entertain Lord and Lady Ormonde, who are now my guests; but I do not think I am wrong in believing that the Emperor desired to give me a further mark of his personal feeling for me, at a moment when the mutual irritation of the German and English people had found violent expression in the press of both countries, and probably desired to have some conversation with me on the subject.

In my telegram No. 1 of the 12th instant I had the honour to report the principal points of the conversation with which the Emperor honoured me, and which I need not repeat. In answer to an observation I made that the irritation in England was very

acute in consequence of the anti-English demonstrations which had been called forth in Germany by a phrase in a speech by Mr. Chamberlain, which had been twisted into an insult to the German army, but could not really bear that interpretation, His Majesty said that I must not forget that the military systems of our two countries were different. In Germany every man had to pass through the army, and even a fancied slight upon the army was certain to call forth a storm of indignation, as it would be regarded as an insult to the nation.

I said that I was perfectly aware that this was the case, but that Mr. Chamberlain's speech had been misinterpreted in Germany, and did not contain any insult to the German army or nation.

The Emperor replied that he believed that Mr. Chamberlain, who was, or, at all events, had been, in favour of a good understanding between England and Germany, had not on that particular occasion offered an insult to Germany, but his subsequent utterances had been unfortunate, and in a recent speech at Birmingham, in alluding to the splendid isolation of England and the attachment of the Colonies, he had given it to be understood that he attached no importance to the friendship or hostility of other countries. Such utterances could not fail to cause great irritation, and were, in His Majesty's opinion, a source of danger to His Majesty's Government.

The whole conversation was marked by great cordiality on the part of the Emperor, and on my observing that, although I had little hope that German public opinion would become favourable to us until the war in South Africa had come to an end, I was optimistic enough to hope that the relations between the two countries would eventually be placed on a satisfactory footing.

The Emperor replied: "Of course they will; they must"; but he added that he feared that the war was not so near its conclusion as people in England seemed to think, and he had heard that some of our officers in South Africa were of opinion that it might continue for some considerable time.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 332.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Africa 631.

(No. 13.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. January 16, 1902.

R. January 20, 1902.

On the 14th instant I had the honour of entertaining the Chancellor of the German Empire at dinner, and had a conversation of some length with his Excellency afterwards, on the subject of the outburst of indignation which had been created in England by the recent debates in the Reichstag.

Count Bülow said that he considered that the English press, and more especially the "Times," had treated him unfairly, particularly with regard to his second speech, which was certainly friendly to England, and had been so understood in the Reichstag.

I replied that I had certainly been disappointed with his Excellency's first speech, and had told Dr. von Mühlburg that I feared it would create a most unfavourable impression in England, but that when I read his Excellency's second speech I understood it as being perfectly satisfactory, and was astonished that the "Times" had received it so unfavourably.

Count Bülow said that he had certainly intended it to be most friendly, and he had been struck by the cheers which had greeted his allusion to the necessity of maintaining the most friendly relations between the two countries. . . . [Details as to press.]

Count Bülow said that recently, I may say during the last few days, a great change had taken place in the tone of the press. A recent speech by Mr. Chamberlain, in

which he said that he declined to receive lessons from a foreign Minister, had been reported without comment, and there was now no danger of the subject being again brought before the Reichstag, and he hoped that now the question might be allowed to drop. . . .

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 333.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Africa 623.

(No. 24.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. January 19, 1902.

My Lord,

R. January 27, 1902.

In the course of the Ball at the Palace last night the Emperor honoured me with three short conversations. The two first were on ordinary subjects, and of the usual friendly nature which the Emperor always displays when speaking with members of this Embassy; but the third took place later in the evening, when, owing to some move among the dancers, I happened to be standing alone next to the Emperor and apart from the rest of the guests. . . .

The Emperor at once expressed the pleasure with which he had seen the spirited answer given by England to the extraordinary attack made by the German Chancellor, and agreed with me that the energy displayed in refuting the unmerited and offensive remarks made in the German Parliament would have salutary effect on our detractors abroad. The eager and pleased look which His Majesty gave me when expressing these views imparted a peculiar emphasis to his words.

The Emperor said he could not understand how Count Bülow should have used such extraordinary language, for it was the clear interest of Germany to remain on good terms with His Majesty's Government; it certainly was of the greatest importance to Austria-Hungary that there should be no friction between England and Germany.

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 334.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Lascelles.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1553.

Foreign Office, January 22, 1902.

Tel. (No. 2.) Confidential.

D. 11 P.M.

Your telegram No. 4.

I am authorised to tell you that if the Emperor will inform the King by letter or telegram that it is His Imperial Majesty's desire that the Prince of Wales' visit should not be abandoned and that His Imperial Majesty feels absolutely confident that the visit will not be attended by any regrettable incidents the King will not press his view and will allow the Prince of Wales to visit Berlin.

If the King's letter has not been recovered, send at once a copy of it to the Emperor.

Private.

There is no time to be lost as Prince should start on Friday.

Can you send me a copy of Palace receipt for King's letter.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1553
Tel. (No. 5.)

Berlin, January 22, 1902.

D. January 22, 11.30 P.M.

R. January 23, 7.30 A.M.

The Emperor paid me a long visit this afternoon and read me a letter to the King which he will send to-night by Special Messenger. In it he explains the delay which has occurred in answering the King's letter of the 15th instant which was due to the accident of the letter having been mislaid. He refutes the King's opinion of feeling in Germany towards England, and maintains that Count Bülow's speeches and more especially his second one were friendly towards England and conveyed no reproach to the British Army of which he was proud to wear the uniform. He refers to what he has himself done to maintain friendly relations, viz., his two visits to England, his refusal to receive ex-President Krüger and his giving the Black Eagle to Lord Roberts, all of which caused dissatisfaction and considerable criticism in Germany. He recites the preparations he has made to receive the Prince of Wales with all honour and says there is no danger of H.R.H. being insulted. No German would think of insulting one of His Majesty's guests and the son of a great and powerful King. He hopes that the King will not be influenced by the German press which is constantly attacking the Government but which has no real significance as he himself is the master in Germany (and) directs the foreign policy of the country. He concludes by saying that the abandonment now of the Prince of Wales' visit would not only cause him great pain but would be considered by the public as a personal offence to him for which it would be difficult to find an explanation.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1551.

(No. 17.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. January 24, 1902.

R. January 27, 1902.

With reference to my telegrams Nos. 4 and 5 of the 22nd instant, I have the honour to report that on receiving the Emperor on the morning of the 22nd at the doors of the English church, where he had come with the Empress and all the members of the Royal Family at present in Berlin, to attend the memorial service on the anniversary of the death of Queen Victoria, I asked His Majesty whether he had received a letter from the King which I had sent to the Palace on the night of the 16th instant. His Majesty having replied in the negative, I requested him to allow me to speak to him after the conclusion of the service. I said that I considered it a most fortunate circumstance that I had had this opportunity of seeing His Majesty, as I could only conclude from the receipt which I held that His Majesty must have received the letter, although I could not reconcile this conclusion with the fact that the preparations for the Prince of Wales' visit still continued. It had struck me as possible that the letter might have miscarried, and a conversation I had had the previous evening with Count Bülow, who said he had no knowledge of His Majesty's having received a letter from the King, confirmed this impression. I then communicated to the Emperor the substance of the King's letter, and handed to him the copy which His Majesty had been graciously pleased to send me, and which I requested him to read. He did so, and said it was really a fatality which had caused that particular letter to go astray. He betrayed considerable irritation, and talked about another Fashoda and the possibility of having to recall Count Metternich. I observed that

if His Majesty recalled his Ambassador in England, my Mission would at once come to an end, and on His Majesty making a complimentary remark about me personally, I said that I implored His Majesty to leave my personality, which was of no importance, apart from the position which I had the honour of holding, entirely out of the question. I reminded His Majesty that on my arrival at Berlin, I had warned both Count Buelow and Baron von Richthofen that the irritation in England in consequence of the violent abuse which had been lavished upon us for the last three years, had become very acute, and might become dangerous, and that I had repeated this to His Majesty himself at the first interview which I had with him at Potsdam. His Majesty nodded assent. I then said that Count Buelow's first speech had appeared to me to be distinctly unfriendly, and that I had told Herr von Mühlberg that he must be prepared for a sharp retort from England. I admitted that when I read Count Buelow's second speech, I thought that he had said all that could be expected of him, and I believed that in normal times it would have been considered as satisfactory in England, but public opinion had been so greatly excited by his first speech that his expression that in the English army there were men who knew how to die was considered an absolutely inadequate defence of our army and had been fixed upon as an aggravation of his first speech. Even brigands and murderers might know how to die bravely, and the accusations of barbarity had not been refuted.

The Emperor protested loudly against this interpretation of Count Buelow's language and said that the German phrase, "Sie wissen zu sterben" conveys to a German mind the very highest compliment to soldiers.

At about two o'clock the Emperor sent me a message through the telephone that the missing letter had been found. At half past three he sent me a further message that he had not yet seen Count Buelow, who was engaged at the Reichstag, and must therefore postpone his visit, which he would make without fail in the course of the afternoon. He arrived at the Embassy at a quarter before seven, and read me the letter which, after consultation with Count Buelow, he had addressed to the King. Count Buelow had at first expressed considerable indignation at the construction which had been put upon his speeches, and at the slight to the Emperor which the abandonment of the Prince of Wales' visit would imply, but His Majesty had persuaded him that a further attempt should be made to prevent a rupture between our two countries. He asked me whether I thought that his letter would have the desired effect, and I replied that I believed it would.

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

No. 337.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1551.

(No. 20.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Berlin, D. January 31, 1902.

R. February 3, 1902.

The Prince of Wales arrived at Berlin at 7 P.M. on the 25th instant.

. . . . His Royal Highness then had a conversation with Count Buelow in which he spoke very frankly with regard to the irritation which His Excellency's utterances in the Reichstag had caused in England. His Royal Highness informed me afterwards that Count Buelow, in explaining the situation, had professed the most friendly sentiments to England.

. . . . Count Buelow on whose left I was placed at dinner expressed his satisfaction at the frank and open manner in which the Prince of Wales had spoken to him, and had allowed him to reply with the same frankness. He had explained to His Royal Highness that the war in South Africa had created an unfavourable impression

on the German people, and in his position as Chancellor he had to consider public opinion. But he could assure His Royal Highness that although the German people were at this moment sentimentally opposed to the English Government on account of the war, there was no wish in Germany to see the power and prestige of England diminished. If the most rabid Anglophobe were asked whether he seriously wished that England should no longer be a Great Power the answer would certainly be in the negative.

. . . . After the departure of His Royal Highness the Emperor remained in conversation with me for some minutes. He expressed the great pleasure which the Prince's visit had given him and his satisfaction that everything had gone off so well. He was glad that His Royal Highness had had a conversation with Count Buelow and had spoken so frankly and openly. . . .

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

MINUTE BY KING EDWARD.

A very satisfactory despatch.—E.R.

No. 338.

Sir C. Scott to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Russia 1640.

(No. 40.) Very Confidential.

St. Petersburg, D. February 5, 1902.

My Lord,

R. February 10, 1902.

In the course of a recent conversation with me, Count Lamsdorff, referring to recent divagations in the public press on matters of foreign policy, observed that of late these organs of public opinion had been assuming so extravagant a pretension to dictate lines of policy to their respective Governments that they seemed to be gradually losing their credit, even incurring some degree of ridicule.

He said that this observation applied to the Russian, as well as to the foreign, press, and he told me that when he first took charge of the Ministry for Foreign Affairs he tried to find some means of checking or correcting the wild and often mischievous articles on foreign affairs which were daily appearing in the often ill-informed leading organs of the Russian press.

After considering various alternatives he formed a sort of Press Intelligence Department in the Foreign Office, and detailed one of his most intelligent and tactful subordinates to preside over it.

He then sent circulars to all the editors of leading papers informing them of its existence, and that its doors would be wide open to them if they liked to send their correspondents to obtain correct information before giving publicity to, or commenting on, current matters or questions of foreign interests.

At first the correspondents came to this office in considerable numbers, but gradually finding that most of the sensational reports which they brought were shown to them there to be either entirely groundless or extravagantly distorted, and that the real facts and information given to them were not sufficiently sensational or spicy to suit the taste of their readers and increase the sale of their papers, most of them left off coming, and professed to conclude that they were purposely being misled, and the extravagance of their articles increased accordingly.

He had considered the suggestion to endeavour to correct the influence on public opinion of these newspaper abuses, by selecting some paper whose articles on foreign policy might be generally credited as based on information derived from official sources, but he had found that the adoption of this suggestion was not altogether desirable, as it would be attended by many disadvantages in this country.

He had, however, adopted a middle course, and, as I was aware, on more than one occasion he had had articles admittedly of official origin inserted in the press when it was especially important that the action of the Government should not be misunderstood. This was a measure which he would only employ when he thought it necessary, but he would not make too frequent a use of it.

At this moment he was glad to believe that there was no danger of the divagations of the Russian press doing serious harm. He had observed that their violent attacks on England were subsiding, and giving place to the discussions of the possibility and expediency of a friendly general understanding between our respective Governments.

Count Lamsdorff said that he found that a desire for such an understanding was especially strong in financial and commercial circles in Russia, and had a strong advocate in M. Witte. He did not, however, ignore the regrettable existence of a large accumulation of prejudices and mistrust in public opinion on both sides, which would have to be contended with, but he seemed to look forward with confidence to the ultimate realisation of this desirable aim, if it were kept steadily in view and too premature or precipitate action avoided.

I ventured to express entire agreement with this view, observing that his Excellency was already aware that His Majesty's Government had always been desirous of a frank and friendly understanding with Russia, especially in regard to Asiatic questions, so as to avert any possible conflict of interests in that part of the world, and that I was convinced that the attainment in time of such an understanding was not beyond the reach of experienced diplomacy, if approached in a spirit of mutual respect for the interests which each Government was bound to safeguard, and without any idea of disturbing the existing *status quo* or infringing on the rights or independence of other Powers. I had observed that in the press discussions of such an understanding on both sides these essential conditions were not always held in view, and that some of the articles seemed to have been inspired by feelings of temporary irritation against other Powers.

Count Lamsdorff said that he entirely shared this view, and that he thought that the more carefully a foreign Minister studied his task of adequately protecting the important interests of his own country, the more seriously he realised the necessity of respecting at the same time the legitimate interests of other Powers. . . .

I have, &c.

CHARLES S. SCOTT.

No. 339.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowne

F.O. Africa 628.

(No. 18.) Africa. Secret.

My Lord,

Paris, D. February 6, 1902.

R. February 8, 1902.

As I informed your Lordship by telegraph last night, I had a conversation yesterday with M. Delcassé upon the correspondence between His Majesty's Government and that of the Queen of the Netherlands respecting the present situation in South Africa.

He laid especial stress upon the declaration made by your Lordship of the impossibility of admitting any foreign intervention whatever, saying that, as it now appeared certain that the Boers would never come forward with an avowal of their surrender of independence, he could not see how *pourparlers* would ever be entered into between them and Lord Kitchener. Even if they arrive at the conviction that their cause is hopeless, their *amour propre* would cause them to consider such an avowal as too great a humiliation; but by the intervention of a third party this humiliation might be averted.

I said that I really did not see how such a war could ever be finished without the beaten party acknowledging its defeat. At any rate, His Majesty's Government, backed, I might say, by all the country, could accept no overture from the Boers than one based upon an unconditional recognition of the loss of their independence. Upon this point British policy was immutable, and equally so upon the non-admission of foreign intervention. . . .

M. Delcassé replied that he did not dispute that His Majesty's Government, once assured that the Boers recognised the irreparable loss of their independence, would treat the vanquished equitably; but he must still maintain that there was no prospect of any arrangement being arrived at without the preliminary good offices of a third party. His insistence upon this, and his taking up of a reference which I made to the action of the French Government in facilitating the preliminaries of peace between Spain and the United States in the late war, impressed me with the idea that some further action of a more general character might not be foreign to his thoughts; but this is mere surmise on my part.

Our conversation was quite unofficial, and I took care to state more than once that my observations must be taken as purely personal.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 340.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Austria 1323.

(No. 101.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. April 11, 1902.

R. April 14, 1902.

After a few polite expressions of pleasure at seeing me again after so long an interval, Count Bülow went at once into the question of the unfortunate want of due appreciation of each other's qualities which so often complicates the good understanding which the German Government are so anxious to maintain with Great Britain. . . .

His Excellency expressed the deep regret which he felt at the want of cordiality which unfortunately showed itself so often between the peoples of Great Britain and Germany, and which he must to a certain extent attribute to the absence in the general English public of a proper appreciation of the part played in Germany by the sentimental side of the German character. The Englishman, who is above all practical in his ideas, cannot allow for the part which the German, who will be perhaps equally practical as the Englishman in his acts, allows to the free play of sentiment in his words. Hence, at the present moment, for instance, those who wish success to the Boers, as the smaller nation struggling with a large one, expect and desire that England should triumph in this war in South Africa, for the interests of those very Germans themselves would be endangered by the victory of the Boers, if such a thing were possible. . . .

He here stopped a moment to say how highly the Emperor appreciated the tact, energy and conciliatory nature of Sir Frank Lascelles, and how thoroughly both His Majesty and the German Government knew how valuable had been his assistance in smoothing down difficulties on various occasions. . . .

Count Bülow then went on to speak of the death of Mr. Rhodes and of the gratification which his bequest for the fifteen scholarships at Oxford to German subjects had given to the Emperor. The fact that the testator had directed that the selection of these fifteen candidates should be left to the Emperor had greatly flattered His Majesty and enhanced the value which he attached to this tribute of goodwill to Germany.

Count Bülow concluded by saying that at present the feeling towards England in Germany was certainly improving, and he trusted that we also would do what we could

to encourage a reciprocal improvement on our side in the public feeling towards Germany. His Excellency was careful all this time to allude to general public feeling in England and made no complaints of any sort against His Majesty's Government.

He did, however, complain rather bitterly of the tone towards Germany adopted by the "Times" correspondent in Berlin, whom he blamed for causing much of the ill-feeling between the two countries. He especially found fault with him for so often giving the publicity of the most important London newspaper to the scurrilous attacks upon England published in some obscure little German prints, which otherwise would have passed unnoticed and have done no harm. He said that this, and the indirect means no doubt employed by Dr. Leyds in the continental press, were at the bottom of much of the absence of sympathy which had occasionally made itself manifest between the two nations, and which was equally harmful to the welfare of both countries.

I need not trouble your Lordship with the comments I made on various portions of Count Bülow's remarks, beyond stating that I pointed out to his Excellency that he had not touched on one of the points which had, perhaps, the most offended public opinion in England, and that was that persons of education and position in Germany appeared to believe the horrible stories of fantastic cruelties which had been published against our soldiers fighting in South Africa, and which every educated man should have felt to be untrue. . . .

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 341.

Sir F. Lascelles to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Germany (Prussia) 1551.

(No. 109.) Confidential.

Berlin, D. June 8, 1902.

My Lord,

R. June 10, 1902.

I had an interview yesterday evening with Count Bülow, who had told me when I met him at Marienburg that he would like to see me before I left for England.

His Excellency expressed his great satisfaction at the termination of the war in South Africa and expressed in warm terms his admiration of the manner in which it had been carried on. Mistakes, no doubt, had been committed by some of the Generals, and the general staff was not so perfect as would be expected in a country like Germany, where far more attention had, for generations, been paid to the army than had been the case in England, but the regimental officers had shown themselves brave and capable and the endurance and discipline of the men had been above all praise.

His Excellency also admired the dignity of the British nation and its calm determination to see the war fought to an end in spite of the reverses at the beginning of the war which in other countries would have brought about the downfall of the Government, if not a revolution. England, in fact, at the end of the war was stronger than at the beginning, and her financial position, in spite of the enormous expenses entailed by the war, had remained unaffected. His Excellency doubted whether any other country could have done so well. . . . [Details as to press.]

I have, &c.

FRANK C. LASCELLES.

*Memorandum by Sir E. Crowe.**Memorandum on the Present State of British Relations with France and Germany.*

(No. 8886*.)

(Extract.)

Foreign Office, January 1, 1907.

More extraordinary still was the behaviour of the German Government in respect to the Transvaal. The special treaty arrangements, which placed the foreign relations of that country under the control of England, were, of course, well known, and understood. Nevertheless, it is certain that Germany believed she might by some fortuitous circumstances hope some day to establish her political dominion over the Boers, and realise her dream of occupying a belt of territory running from east to west right across Africa. She may have thought that England could be brought amicably to cede her rights in those regions as she had done before in other quarters, but, meanwhile, a good deal of intriguing went on which cannot be called otherwise than actively hostile. Opposition to British interests was deliberately encouraged in the most demonstrative fashion at Pretoria, which went so far in 1895 that the British Ambassador at Berlin had to make a protest. German financial assistance was promised to the Transvaal for the purpose of buying the Delagoa Bay Railway, a British concern which had been illegally confiscated by the Portuguese Government, and was then the subject of an international arbitration. When this offer failed, Germany approached the Lisbon Cabinet direct with the demand that, immediately on the arbitration being concluded, Germany and Portugal should deal with the railway by common agreement. It was also significant that at the time of the British annexation of Amatongaland (1895), just south of the Portuguese frontier on the East Coast, Germany thought it necessary to warn England that this annexation was not recognised by the Transvaal, and that she encouraged the feverish activity of German traders to buy up all available land round Delagoa Bay. In the same year, following up an intimation that England's "opposition to German interests at Delagoa Bay"—interests of which no British Government had ever previously been informed—was considered by Germany as one of the legitimate causes of her ill-will towards England, the German Government went out of its way to declare the maintenance of the independence of the Transvaal to be a German national interest. Then followed the chapter of the Jameson raid and the Emperor's famous telegram to President Kruger. The hostile character of that demonstration was thoroughly understood by the Emperor's Government, because we know that preparations were made for safeguarding the German fleet in the contingency of a British attack. But in a way the most important aspect of the incident was that for the first time the fact of the hostile character of Germany's official policy was realised by the British public, who up to then, owing to the anxious care of their Government to minimise the results of the perpetual friction with Germany, and to prevent any aggravation of that friction by concealing as far as possible the unpleasant details of Germany's aggressive behaviour, had been practically unaware of the persistently contemptuous treatment of their country by their Teutonic cousins. The very decided view taken by British public opinion, of the nature of any possible German intervention in South Africa led the German Government, though not the German public, to abandon the design of supplanting England at Pretoria. But for this "sacrifice" Germany, in accordance with her wont, demanded a price—namely, British acquiescence in the reversion to her of certain Portuguese Colonies in the event of their eventual division and appropriation by other Powers. The price was paid. But the manner in which Germany first bullied the Portuguese Government and then practically drove an indignant British Cabinet into agreeing in anticipation to this particular scheme of spoliation of England's most ancient ally, was deeply resented by Lord Salisbury, all the more, no doubt, as by this time, he was fully aware that this new "friendly" settlement of misunderstandings with Germany would be no more lasting than its many predecessors. When, barely twelve months later, the Emperor, unabashed by his recent formal "abandonment of the Boers" threatened that unless the question of the final ownership of Samoa, then under negotiation, was promptly settled in Germany's favour, he would have to reconsider his attitude in the British conflict with the Transvaal which was then on the point of being submitted to the arbitrament of war, it cannot be wondered at that the British Government began to despair of ever reaching a state of satisfactory relations with Germany by continuing in the path of friendly concessions and compromises. Yet no attempt was even then made to seek a new way. The Agreement by which Samoa definitely became German was duly signed, despite the serious protests of our Australian Colonies, whose feelings had been incensed by the cynical disregard with which the German agents in the group, with the open support of their Government, had for a long time violated the distinct stipulations of the Samoan Act agreed to at Berlin by the three interested Powers in 1889. And when shortly after the outbreak of the South African war, Germany threatened the most determined hostility unless England waived the exercise of one of the most ancient and most firmly-established belligerent rights of naval warfare, namely, the search and citation before a Prize Court of neutral mercantile vessels suspected of carrying contraband, England once more preferred an amicable arrangement under which her undoubted rights were practically waived, to embarking on a fresh quarrel with

Germany. The spirit in which this more than conciliatory attitude was appreciated at Berlin became clear when immediately afterwards the German Chancellor openly boasted in the Reichstag that he had compelled England by the display of German firmness to abandon her absolutely unjust claim to interference with the unquestioned rights of neutrals, and when the Emperor subsequently appealed to his nation to hasten on the building of an overwhelming German fleet, since the want of superior naval strength alone had on this occasion prevented Germany from a still more drastic vindication of Germany's interests.

A bare illusion must here suffice to the way in which the German Government at the time of the South African war abetted the campaign of odious calumny carried on throughout the length and breadth of Germany against the character of the British army, without any Government official once opening his mouth in contradiction; and this in the face of the faithful reports known to have been addressed to their Government by the German military officers attached to the British forces in the field. When the Reichstag proceeded in an unprecedented fashion to impugn the conduct of a British Cabinet Minister, it was open to Prince Bülow to enlighten his hearers as to the real facts, which had been grossly misrepresented. We know that he was aware of the truth. We have the report of his long interview with a distinguished and representative English gentleman, a fortnight after Mr. Chamberlain's famous speech, which was alleged to be the cause of offence, but of which a correct version revealing the groundlessness of the accusation had been reported in a widely-read German paper. The Prince then stated that his Government had at that moment no cause to complain of anything in the attitude of British Ministers, yet he descended a few days afterwards to expressing in the Reichstag his sympathy with the violent German outcry against Mr. Chamberlain's supposed statement and the alleged atrocities of the British army, which he knew to be based on falsehoods. Mr. Chamberlain's dignified reply led to extraordinary persistent efforts on the Chancellor's part to obtain from the British Government an apology for the offence of resenting his dishonouring insinuations, and, after all these efforts had failed, he nevertheless intimated to the Reichstag that the British Government had given an explanation repudiating any intention on its part to imply any insult to Germany by what had been said.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE POWERS 1898-1903.

[*ED. NOTE.*—This chapter illustrates the relations of the Great Powers [1898-1903] principally with reference to Italy and the Triple Alliance. Separate treatment is given to the Balkans ending in the Münzsteg Punctation, to the Russian *démarche* in reference to Afghanistan 6th February, 1900, and its consequences; and it includes a lengthy historical memorandum on the Suez Canal.]

I.—GENERAL.

No. 343.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1272.

(No. 70.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. March 13, 1898.

My Lord,

R. March 21, 1898.

During a visit which I paid yesterday to M. de Kállay, the conversation fell upon affairs in the Far East.

In the opinion of his Excellency, who spoke very frankly and of course informally, the turn of events in those regions is far more momentous than anything that has occurred since the fall of the first Napoleon, or, of more recent years, the re-establishment of the German Empire, with this difference, that not only Europe but the whole world is affected by it.

The startling manner in which Russia is asserting herself in furthestmost Asia has not taken M. de Kállay personally by surprise, the steady unbroken Russian progress in that direction being a fact familiar to those who, like himself, keep an attentive watch on Asiatic affairs. From the exodus of Yermak Timofejoff and his Cossacks onwards, says M. de Kállay, the “*Drang nach Osten*” has been continuous in Russia. All other European races move westwards, as is shown by the stream of emigration to America; the Russians alone are attracted by the East, and go there not only to conquer but to colonise. They have already assimilated, in a surprising degree, their more recent acquisitions in Central Asia. Their people, with the semi-nomadic instincts they retain, soon make themselves at home among alien populations. At the same time they don't simply occupy but Russify what they find, and their progress is like the stretching out of the immense homogeneous State which reaches from the Baltic to Kamtschatka. Their advance, therefore, is practically irresistible. At present they are bent upon creating a completely free outlet on the Pacific for their huge Hinterland, and whatever territory they require for that purpose they must occupy and annex. M. de Kállay, with imaginative faculties somewhat unusual in a Minister of Finance, seems, in fact, dazzled by this vision of Russian-Asiatic Empire.

His Excellency went on to say that up till a comparatively recent period he had hoped that we might come to an agreement with Russia for a division of spheres in Asia. He much feared, however, that we had allowed the favourable moment to go by, and that it was now too late for such an understanding.

As to our ability to check the Russian advance, I found M. de Kállay distinctly sceptical, and still more so as to our willingness really to exert ourselves with that object. I represented that public opinion in England appeared to be thoroughly roused on this and other subjects, and that there were symptoms of a combative spirit in the nation such as had scarcely manifested themselves since the Crimean War. M. de Kállay was politely incredulous on this point. Individual Englishmen revealed the daring national qualities when engaged in sport or exploration, but the great body of the people were rendered indifferent and inert by trade and prosperity, and would

not, he believed, brace themselves to meet a great war. Besides, however strong we might be at sea, on land we could do but little. Sooner than come to a rupture with a great Power we would probably give way.

While begging to differ from M. de Kállay as to his estimate of our temper and resources, I asked him whether he did not hold that prestige was a very important factor in dealing with Asiatics, and whether our being thought to yield to Russia might not be prejudicial to us in India, M. de Kállay emphatically said that he considered this a great danger, and, as a matter of sound policy, it ought, in his opinion, to be avoided at any sacrifice.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 344.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1273.

(No. 173.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. May 31, 1898.

My Lord,

R. June 3, 1898.

Count Nigra, whom I had not seen for some time, paid me a visit the other day.

As regards the Austro-Russian *entente*, Count Nigra observed that too much importance had been allowed to be attached to it from the first, a false impression being thus produced as to its extent and binding character. I said that the *entente* constituted so great an improvement on the relations existing before it between the two Empires that there was perhaps some excuse for those who had brought it about taking pride in it, and not checking the tendency to over-estimate it. I found my colleague agreed with me in thinking that events have shown how entirely the agreement is at the mercy of the whims or inspirations of one of the parties to it.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 345.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1273.

(No. 192.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. June 23, 1898.

My Lord,

R. June 29, 1898.

The Palacky celebration at Prague, of which I had the honour to furnish some account to your Lordship in my despatch No. 187 of the 19th instant, continues to occupy public attention in Hungary no less than here.

Count Goluchowski made some allusion to it yesterday in conversation with me, and expressed regret that a member of the Russian Imperial Family—especially one who has identified himself so much with Panslavist aspirations as the Grand Duke Constantine Constantinovitch—should have put himself prominently forward on this occasion.

The speech made by General Komarow, which has now been published at length, contains passages against the Germans of such violence as almost to justify the view taken of it as an incitement to civil war between the Germanic and Slav races of the Empire.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1274.

(No. 271.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. September 19, 1898.

My Lord,

R. September 22, 1898.

In my immediately preceding despatch I referred to the exceptional distinction with which it had pleased the Emperor Francis Joseph, in the midst of overwhelming affliction,⁽¹⁾ to treat his German ally. Yet, in making a Sovereign much younger than himself, and of a disposition so opposed to his own, the intimate associate, as it were, of his sorrow, the Emperor can hardly have been impelled by affinity of sentiment and still less by specially affectionate regard. It is matter of common knowledge in Court circles at Vienna that the Emperor William is held rather to have thrust himself of late years unduly upon his Imperial neighbour, and that his visits here have been more frequent than welcome.

On this solemn occasion, however, there can be no doubt that the Emperor went out of his way to show honour to his Ally. He was pressed not to add to the fatigue and trial of the day the effort of meeting the German Emperor at a distant Railway terminus, but insisted upon doing so, and he afterwards chose to have his His Majesty at his side at a moment when he might well have shrunk from contact with any but the most valued of relatives or friends.

Granted these premises, it is difficult not to infer that he had it for his object to mark as overtly as possible the intimate nature of his relations with the German ruler. The untoward course of internal affairs, the voice of those who warn him that his Empire is going to pieces, the hollow nature of his understanding with Russia on Balkanic affairs, the sense that he must seek for support somewhere—and where else is it to be found?—may all have led him to make manifest the stringent character of the German bond. . . .

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

(1) [The Empress Elizabeth was assassinated at Geneva on the 10th September.]

Sir P. Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Italy 798.

(No. 12.) Confidential.

Rome, D. January 18, 1899.

My Lord,

R. January 23, 1899.

The policy which, for a long time past, has been pursued here by the French Embassy of attempting to detach Italy from the Triple Alliance has been clearly exposed in the singularly indiscreet article contributed to the last number of the "Revue des Deux-Mondes" by M. Billot, late French Ambassador to the Quirinal.

M. Barrère, the present Ambassador, is credited with the design of strenuously pursuing this policy, and his success in concluding the Commercial Treaty, which has so excited the jealousy of his predecessor, has led some people to think that his efforts might possibly produce some effect. Admiral Canevaro informs me confidentially that a warning has been sent to him from Berlin, through the Italian Ambassador, to beware of French designs against the Triple Alliance, and against the understanding with England.

Such warnings were not needed, he said, as the designs of France were so obvious that they could deceive no one. The Italian Government was perfectly aware that the object of France, if she could once detach Italy from her allies, would be to proceed, in combination with the Vatican, to bring about troubles in Italy with a view

of upsetting the Monarchy and establishing a Republican form of government, which would be more subservient to French influence than the Monarchy.

For the moment, the French Government were making all sorts of advances and professions of friendship to Italy. The Italian Government saw no reason why they should not get as much advantage as they could from this new attitude on the part of France, but they would under no circumstances make any change in their policy as regarded the Triple Alliance or England. With the latter Power they desired to maintain the close understanding in all that concerned the Mediterranean, which had existed for so long a time, and to which they attached the greatest importance.

I have, &c.

PHILLIP CURRIE.

No. 348.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1285.

(No. 111.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. May 6, 1899.

My Lord,

R. May 15, 1899.

I have recently had an opportunity of obtaining certain information in regard to the present relations between Austria and Russia from an absolutely reliable source.

Your Lordship will remember that various circumstances occurred since the agreement came to on the occasion of the Emperor Francis Joseph's visit to St. Petersburg two years ago, which considerably impaired the friendly feeling then established, and that Count Mouravieff's visit to Vienna last autumn was also unsuccessful in leading to any more cordial understanding.

The actual relations between the two Empires are now described to me as being neither better nor worse, but the same grounds for mistrust remain on both sides with apparently little prospect of their removal. In Vienna considerable irritation, which is shared in the highest quarters, is felt just now with Russia, as it is believed that she is responsible for the intrigues of the Pan-Servian and Orthodox parties in Bosnia and the Herzegovina, while the policy of Austria in the Kingdom of Servia continues at St. Petersburg to be regarded with equal suspicion—and Count Goluchowski himself is viewed with excessive mistrust. I have even been told, in the strictest confidence, that the Emperor Nicholas spoke plainly on this latter point to the late Austrian Ambassador at the Russian Court, and that His Majesty's remarks were repeated to the Emperor Francis Joseph.

My informant went on to observe that it was the fashion at St. Petersburg to endeavour to make out that the Triple Alliance was going to pieces, and deplored the internal complications in Austria as well as the policy pursued by Count Thun's Government in the conflict between Czechs and Germans, which gave some colour to the assertion that the relations between this Empire and Germany were not as cordial as they might be.

A real understanding with Russia was all very well, and no doubt most desirable, but could only be attained if the close alliance with Germany continued. Should the latter come to an end the slender threads which still bound Italy to Austria would, as a matter of course, be rent asunder. Austria would then be isolated, and an Austria isolated abroad and weakened by internal dissension would be of no more account to Russia, who would not even find it worth while to treat with her. Upon my enquiry how an eventual incorporation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina in the Austrian Empire might be viewed at St. Petersburg, I was told, in reply, that the matter would hardly be so easy of accomplishment as Count Goluchowski at one time seemed to anticipate. The possibility was, indeed, not excluded that the Emperor Nicholas and his Government might be willing to agree to such an arrangement in return for certain compensations on the part of Austria, but I was assured that public

opinion in Russia, as represented by the strictly Orthodox and Slavophil party, would bitterly resent anything of the kind. This party had quite given up the Northern Slavs, such as the Czechs of Bohemia, who could be of little use to them, but there was a growing feeling among them that all the Southern Slavs of the Orthodox religion belonged to Russia's sphere, and should on no account be given over to another Power. For this reason, amongst others, the small State of Montenegro was invaluable as an outpost from whence intrigues might be started, and Russian influence might make itself felt in the neighbouring provinces whenever the Government at St. Petersburg desired it.

Under these circumstances there is but little likelihood of the establishment of more cordial relations between Austria and Russia in the immediate future, and this appears to be recognised here, as well as the fact that it will be desirable in the future to prevent the intimate understanding with Germany being clouded by any further misunderstandings, such as those which have occurred during the past winter.

I have, &c.

RALPH MILBANKE.

No. 349.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Italy 817.

(No. 153.) Most Confidential.

Rome, D. September 28, 1900.

My Lord,

R. October 6, 1900.

. . . . The King has intimated his intention of receiving the foreign Representatives early in November, and I should be grateful for any instructions which your Lordship may see fit to give me as to the language which I should hold to His Majesty in regard to the relations between the two countries.

I have, &c.

CURRIE.

No. 350.

The Marquess of Salisbury to Lord Currie.

F.O. Italy 818.

Foreign Office, October 12, 1900.

Tel. (No. 177.) Most Confidential.

D. 6 P.M.

Your despatch No. 153 of 28th September.

The sympathy of Her Majesty's Government and of the British nation with Italy is well-known and undiminished. We have a strong interest in maintaining the *status quo* in the Mediterranean.

Beyond this we cannot predict our policy in the event of a war, unless we can foresee what the *casus belli* will be.

The public opinion here will be guided by the cause of the quarrel; and in questions of peace and war the action of the Government is entirely dependent on that opinion.

No. 351.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. France 3533.

Paris, D. March 13, 1901.

(No. 100.) Secret.

R. March 14, 1901.

My Lord,

The last paragraph of Sir F. Lascelle's extremely interesting despatch No. 48, Secret and Confidential, of the 28th ultimo, reporting his Excellency's conversations

with the German Emperor, touches upon the relations between Germany and France, in regard to which His Majesty states that his policy is to induce France to withdraw from the Russian Alliance.

I have often discussed this subject with Prince Munster who had certainly plenty of reason to congratulate himself on the success of his efforts to place the relations between the two countries on a better footing. The Prince was untiring in those efforts, and he, at any rate, had the satisfaction of convincing himself of his own personal popularity in France, a popularity which went a considerable distance in obliterating the prejudice against the German character and temperament. But he was certainly premature in holding that the memory of Alsace-Lorraine was now only a tradition of "ancient history," and that the more amicable feeling towards Germany was already strong enough to compensate for the disappointment felt in France at the egotism and indifference of Russia.

I cannot but express my conviction that what the French fear is that German policy is exactly the converse of that which the Emperor professed to Sir F. Lascelles; and that they apprehend that His Majesty would like to detach Russia from France and make his great Eastern neighbour his own ally to the exclusion of this country.

It is not to be forgotten that during the last two years the current of public opinion in Germany and France has run in one channel in its direction towards a common object of antipathy. The French Press, and also French politicians and officials have been gratified by the bitterness of the German Press and people against British policy in South Africa. I do not desire to speculate upon the possibility that this joint sentiment has been diplomatically "*exploité*" for the purpose of diminishing the force of those memories which the Emperor describes as belonging to a bygone time; but it would be absurd to suppose that public opinion in Germany has derived no gratification from an identity of sentiment towards England which has reciprocally caused so much pleasure in France.

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 352.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Italy 836.

(No. 62.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Rome, D. April 14, 1901.

R. April 22, 1901.

I have had some conversation with my Austrian and German colleagues respecting the attitude of the Italian Government in regard to the renewal of the Triple Alliance and the reception of the Italian fleet at Toulon. While expressing confidence that no change of policy is contemplated, they both show considerable anxiety as to the effect which the demonstrations at Toulon may produce in Italy. They take it for granted that the French will do their utmost to detach Italy from the Triple Alliance, and the German Ambassador mentioned a rumour that Russian influence had been brought to bear upon the King of Italy through the Montenegrin connections of the Queen.

Reports have been current that France had offered concessions to Italy in regard to Tripoli, and it is felt that in the improbable event of her being really willing to assist Italian views in that direction, the adherence of Italy to existing alliances could hardly be counted upon.

The German Ambassador observed that England was in a position to influence Italy more than any other Power, and he feared that of late we had somewhat

neglected her, and that this had been felt by the Italian Government. It was, he said, to be desired that His Majesty's Government should show a little more interest in Italian affairs.

At present neither the Austrian nor the German Ambassador has been able to form any reliable estimate of the King's views and intentions in regard to foreign affairs. At their respective audiences to present their credentials His Majesty did not allude to politics. My experience is the same, and when I again presented my credentials, last week, the King spoke only of the Boer war, of which he takes rather a gloomy view, and of the necessity for Great Britain to adopt compulsory military service. . . .

I have, &c.
CURRIE.

No. 353.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Lord Currie.

F.O. Italy 834.

(No. 226.) Secret.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, December 17, 1901.

The Italian Ambassador asked me to-day whether I had noticed Signor Prinetti's recent declaration with regard to the mutual confidence which now characterises the relations between the French and Italian Governments.

I told his Excellency that I had read Signor Prinetti's speech with much interest.

His Excellency proceeded to observe that the good understanding thus arrived at between the two Powers could not fail to have a tranquillising effect upon European politics, and that it had this further advantage, that it put an end to the feeling of annoyance which had been created in Italy by the conclusion of the Anglo-French Convention of 1899 concerning the hinterland of Tripoli.

His Excellency added, with a laugh, that because a Power belonged to the Triple Alliance, there was no reason why it should not occasionally make international arrangements on its own account. Prince Bismarck's understanding with Russia in 1886 was a case in point.

I am, &c.
LANSDOWNE.

No. 354.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Austria 1812.

(No. 287.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. December 19, 1901.

R. December 23, 1901.

The article published a few days ago by the "Temps" to the effect that France would have no objection to an Italian occupation of Tripoli, has attracted considerable notice in political circles at Vienna, and although Count Goluchowski, in speaking of the matter yesterday, ridiculed the article itself, observing that it was very easy to give away what was some one else's property, I am confidentially informed that not a little anxiety is entertained here at the state of public feeling in Italy and the attempts which are being made by France to draw her away from the Triple Alliance.

It is admitted here as an undoubted fact that the movement in favour of a closer understanding with France has made great progress of late in Italy, not only in the ranks of certain political parties, but also amongst the general public, and the well-wishers of the Triple Alliance feel that instead of having only the hostility of the Church to reckon with, they will now have the whole weight of French influence thrown into the scales against them. Much depends, too, on the coming negotiations for a

renewal of the Commercial Treaty between Austria and Italy, which turns principally on the question of the import into Austria of Italian wines, and unless sufficient concessions are granted by Austria to the Italian wine producers, so much dissatisfaction will be felt, that the task of those who wish to renew the political alliance will be materially increased.

I gather, however, that although the present trend of political public feeling in Italy is being closely watched, there is for the moment no real apprehension on the part of the Imperial Government that Italy will break away from the Triple Alliance, and great confidence is felt in King Victor Emmanuel himself, whose influence, it is believed, will continue to be exercised in favour of maintaining the policy, so closely adhered to by the late King, and which has stood the test of so many years.

I have, &c.

RALPH MILBANKE.

No. 355.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Italy 853.

(No. 1.) Confidential.

Rome, D. January 1, 1902.

My Lord,

R. January 6, 1902.

In the course of a long conversation yesterday with Signor Prinetti he alluded with some bitterness to the habitual neglect of Italy by Lord Salisbury's Government. I endeavoured to the best of my ability to combat his assertions, but he persisted, saying that the Italian Government was now used to it and expected nothing else; and appealing to the authority of Lord Rosebery, who had, he said, recently made a public statement to the same effect, and to his own predecessor M. Visconti Venosta, who had stated that "*pour le gouvernement anglais l'Italie est une quantité négligeable.*" M. Prinetti then spoke of the omission on the part of His Majesty's Government to make any communication to Italy respecting the Anglo-French agreement of 1899, which he thought they had a right to expect in view of the Anglo-Italian agreement of 1887.

He did not want, he said, to go through a list of grievances, but he could not help observing that it was, to say the least, remarkable that, considering the vast populations gathered under British rule, time had been found by the Secretary for the Colonies, in the midst of all the pressing preoccupations of recent years, to abolish the Italian language in the only dependency of Great Britain where it was in use. He would not listen to the often repeated explanations of the necessity for the step, and when I referred to the friendly spirit shewn by His Majesty's Government in the recent settlement of the Soudan boundary and the offer of the Brazilian frontier Arbitration to King Victor Emanuel III, he rather made light of those incidents.

I have, &c.

CURRIE.

MINUTES.

Lord Lansdowne.

Signor Prinetti ought not to be permitted to make without contradiction the statement about Malta.

We are not "abolishing the Italian language," which by the way is only understood in Malta by 10 per cent. of the population. What we are doing is to insist that in a British Colony which is also a British fortress the people shall have a free choice presented to them as to whether their children shall learn English or Italian as the second language to the Native patois. About 90 per cent. choose English, and it is evident that in a few years it will be most convenient that the official language of the Courts shall be English.

I think some statement should be made to this effect.—J. C. January 1.

This grievance applies to affairs which arose from three to three and a half years ago. It should have been raised then. It is an intricate question and I do not remember all the details.—S.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Italy 853.

(No. 8.) Confidential.

Rome, D. January 5, 1902.

My Lord,

R. January 13, 1902.

In the course of an audience with which I was honoured by King Victor Emanuel III on the 2nd instant, His Majesty spoke to me, not as a diplomat, he said, but informally, respecting the relations between Italy and Great Britain.

The burden of his song was the neglect of Italy by the English Government. This neglect had gone on now, he said, for some years, and it appeared extraordinary to Italians that they should be so treated by a Power which had been their friend. I attempted to deprecate His Majesty's views, but he went on to specify the grievances that dwelt most in his mind. First and foremost was the omission to include Italy in the Agreement with France as to spheres of influence in Africa; next came the lukewarmness shown in supporting Italian aims in China; and then the language question in Malta. These and other faults of omission and commission on the part of His Majesty's Government have evidently come by long mediation of them to have such an irritating effect on the King and his Foreign Minister that they are unable to discuss them with calmness or judge them with fairness.

I have, &c.

CURRIE.

Sir E. Monson to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. France 3576.

(No. 12.) Secret.

Paris, D. January 10, 1902.

My Lord,

R. January 11, 1902.

I had the honour, in my despatch No. 4 of the 5th instant, to transmit to your Lordship the reproductions in the French press of the details of an interview reported in the "*Giornale d'Italia*" to have been accorded by M. Delcassé to a correspondent of that paper with reference to the relations between France and Italy, and your Lordship will undoubtedly have received the original text in Italian from His Majesty's Ambassador at Rome. . . .

As far as I have been able to make out from those of my colleagues who are chiefly interested in the matter, the impression created by the parade of friendliness towards France, which has taken place in Italy, is that the latter simply regards it as useful in obtaining better consideration for her interests in the renewal of her Treaty engagements with Austria and Germany. But the language just used by Count Bülow in Parliamentary debate as to the actual value of the Triple Alliance in view of the present continental situation, would seem to indicate that, if such had been the idea at Rome, the calculation was a mistaken one. . . .

The possibility and advantages of an intimate combination of the Latin races are themes which have been discussed by no means infrequently in the French press. There has been notoriously a drawing together of late years between France and Spain; and the chances of reconciling the interests of the two countries in the Mediterranean and in North-West Africa have attracted much attention and notice. It is not so easy to see how such a reconciliation can be effected, when it is well understood that M. Delcassé holds firmly the opinion that if there is any one question on which her interests would force France to draw the sword, it would be the interference of any Power whatever in Morocco. His Excellency has, it is said, repeatedly expressed his belief that it would be unwise for France to take any step, either at present or for some time to come, to disturb the *status quo* in that country, but has

let it be clearly understood that France could never tolerate that the dominions of His Shereefian Majesty should fall under any other influence than her own. . . .

I have, &c.

EDMUND MONSON.

No. 358.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Austria 1322.

(No. 21.)

Vienna, D. January 16, 1902.

My Lord,

R. January 20, 1902.

The statement made in the course of Count Bülow's speech in the Reichsrath with regard to the small importance which the Triple Alliance now has for Germany has naturally attracted attention here, and has been much commented on in the Austrian Press.

I gather from the language which has been held to me in private conversation with influential people that the Austro-Hungarian Government do not attach too much importance to these words of the German Chancellor, and are disposed to take them as addressed to Italy more than to this Government. A very leading authority told me three days ago that Germany would require the connection with Austria-Hungary whether Italy abandoned the Triple Alliance or not, and therefore he professed to attach little importance to the apparently indiscreet words of the Chancellor. . . .

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 359.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Lord Currie.

F.O. Italy 852.

(No. 18.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Foreign Office, February 3, 1902.

You have on several occasions and particularly in your despatch No. 1. Confidential, of the 1st instant, mentioned to me Signor Prinetti's complaints of the habitual neglect with which Italy had been treated by the British Government during recent years.

The only two cases which Signor Prinetti appears to have cited as illustrations of this habitual neglect were the conduct of Her late Majesty's Government in failing to make any communication to that of Italy respecting the Anglo-French Agreement of 1899, and the alleged abolition of the Italian language in Malta.

I desire in this despatch to offer a few observations upon the first of these complaints.

It is, no doubt, the case that no special reference was made to the Italian Government on the occasion of the conclusion of the Anglo-French Agreement of 1899. There was, however, apparently no reason why such a reference should have been made. The Agreement did not affect the existing rights of any Power, and certainly did not affect Italian interests, present or prospective, on the southern shores of the Mediterranean. It would not, however, be accurate to say that no steps were taken by Her late Majesty's Government for the purpose of satisfying themselves upon this point. You reported in your telegram No. 52 of the 3rd November, 1898, and in your despatch No. 214 of the following day, that you had been informed by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs that the matter would not interest Italy so long as the Agreement affected only the regions south of 15° latitude, although, should it extend north of that parallel, so as to include part of the Hinter-

land of Tripoli, the *status quo* in the Mediterranean, which Italy regarded as of such vital importance, would be affected. In the *pro-memoriâ* handed to you upon that occasion by Admiral Canevaro it is distinctly stated that Italy has no interests, direct or indirect, present or future, in the regions south of latitude 15° , and that the fundamental basis of Italian policy in the Mediterranean is the maintenance of the *status quo*. This definition of the interests of Italy was not lost sight of by Lord Salisbury. The line laid down in the Anglo-French Agreement, to the west and east of which Great Britain and France respectively engaged to acquire neither territory nor influence, is not drawn further north than 15° of north latitude. To the north of that degree the line represents merely the limit beyond which the French Government would not at any time advance its pretensions. The Articles in which this limit it laid down were carefully worded so as to avoid bringing into question either the existing rights of other Powers or any prospective claim which they might hereafter put forward; and in regard to the territories north of 15° , there is no indication that Great Britain contemplates either extension of influence or acquisition of territory to the disturbance of the *status quo*. The effect of the stipulation is merely that France undertakes not to advance, in any event, so as to overlap Darfur to the north, while she is equally protected from any extension of British influence which would similarly overlap Wadai or command the main caravan routes leading thence to the Mediterranean.

The subject was further discussed in the spring of 1899, when the Italian Ambassador at this Court attempted to show that the interests of Italy were injuriously affected by the Agreement, and proposed on behalf of his Government that France and England should give Italy an undertaking that neither of them would acquire territorial or political influence north of the parallel which intersects the southern extremity of the Fezzan.

It was then explained to his Excellency that, as I have already stated, the clause in the Declaration which related to the countries north of latitude 15° was worded in a negative manner, and contained no recognition of rights nor any pronouncement on territorial claims. Upon this and subsequent occasions Lord Salisbury declined to discuss the future destination of Tripoli, the ownership of which was, as he pointed out, not doubtful; and he expressed his opinion that it would be impossible for us to fetter ourselves by promises of inaction in a contingency, the circumstances of which it was impossible for us to foresee.

While language to this effect has been constantly held to the Representatives of the Italian Government, the Turkish Government, which has not infrequently shown signs of uneasiness with regard to possible designs of France or Italy upon Tripoli, has always been given to understand that it was the desire of His Majesty's Government to maintain the *status quo* on the shores of the Mediterranean, and that we would take no part in any attempt to alter the position of Tripoli to the detriment of the Turkish Government.

The question has again acquired prominence in consequence of the assurances said to have been given to Italy by France in regard to the future of Tripoli.

The exact purport of those assurances still remains somewhat obscure.

In your telegram No. 3 of the 13th January you informed me that the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs handed to you, confidentially, the following sketch of a Declaration, described by him as being identical with that which had been given by the French :—

“The two Governments having again taken into friendly consideration the situation created in the region of Africa to the west of the Valley of the Nile by the Anglo-French Convention of March 1899, the Government of His Britannic Majesty have taken the opportunity to state that the Convention lays down in the regions in question, and more particularly in the direction of the Vilayet of Tripoli, an extreme limit of expansion which they do not intend in any eventuality to overpass.”

His Majesty's Government were unable to understand the bearing of this assurance upon the Vilayet of Tripoli which, as far as they are aware, lies wholly, or almost wholly, to the north of the Tropic of Cancer, and may, therefore, be said to be outside the scope of the Anglo-French Agreement.

I forwarded to you (in my telegram No. 3 of the 20th instant) the draft of a Declaration which His Majesty's Government would be ready to make respecting the Agreement of 1899. This draft ran as follows :—

“The Undersigned, &c., is authorised to declare, on behalf of the Government of His Britannic Majesty, that the Agreement between Great Britain and France of the 21st March, 1899, laid down a line to the west and east of which respectively the two Signatory Powers bound themselves not to acquire territory or political influence in the regions traversed by the said line; but that the Agreement in no way purported to deal with the rights, whether present or prospective, of other Powers, and that in particular as regards the Vilayet of Tripoli all such rights remain entirely unaffected by it.”

A Declaration to this effect would have been sufficient to place clearly on record that, as has been repeatedly explained by His Majesty's Government, the Agreement, so far as it affected the Hinterland of Tripoli, was entirely without prejudice to the rights of other Powers; while it did not even mention, or in any way refer to, the Province of Tripoli itself, the southern boundary of which does not appear to have been very adequately defined, but the whole of which, as I have already observed, is believed to lie to the north of the point at which the Anglo-French line commences.

It was therefore with some surprise that I heard that the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs desired that the draft should be altered in such a way as to substitute for it a Declaration that Great Britain would remain now and hereafter disinterested in that province. The proposal is in effect a revival of that negatived by Lord Salisbury in 1899, and is one to which, for the reasons then fully stated, His Majesty's Government could not give their adhesion. Such a Declaration would, as I have already pointed out, be opposed to the spirit of our Treaty engagements to Turkey, and if any evidence of its tendency were necessary, that evidence would be found in the statement made to you by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, to the effect that the Italian Government has received from other foreign Governments not only the assurance which we are invited to give, but also an intimation that Italy is at liberty to choose her own time for realising her designs upon the province. This indication of objects, inconsistent with the integrity of Turkey and the maintenance of the *status quo*, is emphasised by the further statement of the Minister that, if once the Italian Government knew that all the Maritime Powers were pledged to keep their hands off Tripoli, they could begin to make arrangements for the immigration of Italians into that province.

It is impossible that His Majesty's Government should give to that of Italy a Declaration which is asked for on such grounds, or susceptible of being construed in the manner I have indicated. We are, however, sincerely desirous of affording evidence of our friendship, and of reassuring them both with regard to the scope of the Agreement of 1899 and as to the present intention of His Majesty's Government. I am therefore ready to give a positive assurance that His Majesty's Government have no aggressive or ambitious designs in regard to the Vilayet of Tripoli, that they continue to be sincerely desirous of maintaining the *status quo* there as in other parts of the coast of the Mediterranean, and that, if at any time an alteration of the *status quo* should become inevitable, it would be their object that such alteration should not be of a nature to operate to the detriment of Italian interests.

Your Excellency is authorised to convey to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs the substance of these observations, and I shall be glad to learn how far such assurances as I have suggested would satisfy His Excellency's wishes.

I have addressed to you a separate despatch containing some observations and explanations on the language question in Malta.

I am, &c.

LANSDOWNE.

No. 360.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Lord Currie.

F.O. Tripoli 94.

(No. 36.)

My Lord,

Foreign Office, March 7, 1902.

I duly received your Excellency's telegram No. 15 of the 21st ultimo, in which you report the communication made to you by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, in reply to the request which you were instructed to make, that His Majesty's Government might be furnished with the text of the French Declaration respecting Tripoli.

The request was a natural one, in view of the fact that M. Prinetti in his interview with you on the 2nd and 13th January, asked for a Declaration from His Majesty's Government "similar to" or "identical with" that obtained from France, and that on the 18th ultimo his Excellency pressed for the adoption of a certain phrase on the ground that it was "borrowed from the French Declaration."

The answer of M. Prinetti to the enquiry is, however, so restricted as to leave His Majesty's Government still in ignorance of the date of the French Declaration, of the form in which it was made and whether it was given by itself and unconditionally or as part of an Agreement affecting other questions.

His Majesty's Government had hoped to be treated with less reserve, but they are unwilling to leave room for any doubts on the part of the Italian Government as to the perfect friendliness and loyalty of their intentions, and they do not wish to raise unnecessary difficulties upon questions of detail and wording.

They find it rather difficult to grasp the precise purport of the French Declaration, as the expression "la Tripolitaine Cyrénaïque" is of doubtful geographical significance, and might plausibly be construed as leaving out of question all the Western portion, if not, indeed, the whole, of the actual Vilayet of Tripoli. On the other hand, they are assured that the phrase "the Vilayet of Tripoli and the Mutessarifik of Benghazi" is sufficient to comprise the whole region on the northern coast of Africa now under the direct rule of the Porte, and ordinarily known as Tripoli, and that the additional mention of the Mutessarifik of Murzuk is superfluous, as that Mutessarifik forms an integral part of the vilayet.

You are, therefore, authorised to declare on behalf of the Government of His Britannic Majesty, that the Agreement between Great Britain and France of the 21st March, 1899, laid down a line, to the east and west of which, respectively, the two Signatory Powers bound themselves not to acquire territory or political influence in the region traversed by the said line, but that the Agreement in no way purported to deal with the rights of other Powers, and that in particular as regards the Vilayet of Tripoli and the Mutessarifik of Benghazi; all such rights remain entirely unaffected by it.

You are further authorised to give an assurance that His Britannic Majesty's Government have no aggressive or ambitious designs in regard to Tripoli as above described; that they continue to be sincerely desirous of the maintenance of the *status quo* there, as in other parts of the coast of the Mediterranean; and that if at any time an alteration of the *status quo* should take place, it would be their object that, so far as is compatible with the obligations resulting from the Treaties which at present form part of the public law of Europe, such alteration should be in conformity with Italian interests. This assurance is given on the understanding and in full confidence

that Italy on her part has not entered, and will not enter, into arrangements with other Powers in regard to this or other portions of the coast of the Mediterranean of a nature inimical to British interests.

Your Excellency will hand a copy of this despatch to the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs, and if his Excellency should deem it essential to have a more formal record, you are authorised to embody the two immediately preceding paragraphs in a note. It would not, in our opinion, be desirable that the text of the note should be published, though we should not object to the general purport of the assurances given by us being made known if, for Parliamentary reasons, the Italian Government should find this necessary. In this case we should wish to be consulted as to the terms in which such an announcement might be made.

I am, &c.
LANSDOWNE.

No. 361.

Lord Currie to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

Rome, March 12, 1902.

F.O. Italy 857.

D. 12.3 P.M.

Tel. (No. 26.)

R. 4.50 P.M.

My telegram No. 25 of yesterday.

I have handed to Minister for Foreign Affairs note respecting Tripoli dated the 11th March.

His Excellency showed me confidentially French declaration, which is dated the 14th December, 1900, and I made a copy of it.

It contains nothing more than the assurance of which we have already been informed.

With regard to Morocco, his Excellency said that the only assurance given by Italy was one of "désintéressement," and that it was given to the French Government with special reference to the existence of a gun manufactory under Italian management at Fez.

Foreign Minister asked whether it was possible that His Majesty's Government had any suspicion that Italy might have entered into an engagement with France in regard to Italy. If so, he could give me the most solemn assurance that none existed.

Foreign Minister expressed his cordial thanks for the goodwill shown by His Majesty's Government, and will send a formal acknowledgment of my note to the Italian Ambassador in London for communication to your Lordship.

No. 362.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Austria 1323.

(No. 97.)

Vienna, D. April 10, 1902.

My Lord,

R. April 14, 1902.

In the course of a visit which he paid me last week, Count Nigra expressed the great satisfaction he felt at the improvement which had lately taken place in the relations between Great Britain and Italy, and begged I would believe how much the action taken by your Lordship in regard to Tripoli had been appreciated at Rome.

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 363.

Sir F. Plunkett to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Austria 1323.

(No. 127.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. May 8, 1902.

My Lord,

R. May 12, 1902.

The relations between this Empire and Italy have, as your Lordship knows from several of my preceding despatches, been for some time past, and from various causes, growing gradually less cordial; the impression here is that much of the harm done arises from the activity and personal ambition of the French Ambassador to the Quirinal, M. Barrère, who is devoting his undoubted talents to detaching Italy, if possible, from the Triple Alliance.

Fortunately, however, for Austria-Hungary, M. Barrère's influence at Rome lies, it is here believed, with the Italians of the Left and of Republican tendencies; therefore, the King and Court, who feel the slightness of the hold which Monarchy in Italy has on the affection of the population, hesitate to abandon the support they have so far found in the alliance with two powerful Empires, and object to putting themselves at the service of Republican France.

I find very leading Austrians believe that fear of the Republican contagion in Italy has been the chief cause which has prevented King Victor Emmanuel from abandoning the Triple Alliance.

It is hoped that Count Nigra, who has now gone for a few days to attend the Court ceremonies at Turin, will be able to smoothen over the last questions which still remain unsettled; and the Austro-Hungarian Government seem to be tolerably confident that his Excellency's efforts in this direction will be successful.

I have, &c.

F. R. PLUNKETT.

No. 364.

Sir R. Rodd to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Italy 855.

(No. 142.) Confidential.

Rome, D. July 9, 1902.

My Lord,

R. July 14, 1902.

The comments of English journals upon the recent debate in the House of Commons, in which the relations of Great Britain and Italy were discussed, and the observations made by certain critics of the Government have evidently flattered the self-complacency of Italian politicians.

The natural consequence of these criticisms, together with the cordial sentiments expressed for this country by the Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and the declarations simultaneously made in the French Chamber by M. Delcassé on the renewal of the Triple Alliance, has been to produce in Italy a consequential feeling of importance which is as palatable as it is new to experience. Some encouragement has at the same time been afforded to the official organs of opinion here to claim justification for the complaint that England had, up to recent times, treated Italy with neglect, seeing that politicians in England have openly expressed their regret that she has been allowed, if not compelled, to bestow no small a portion of her affections elsewhere. . . .

The feeling of bitterness against France was studiously exploited so long as Signor Crispi occupied the political arena, and while every incident which could serve as a pretext for intensifying it was made the most of, there was a truce to the old bickerings with Austria, and Commercial Treaties with the two central Empires to

some extent compensated Italy for her financial losses, but the situation was still an unnatural one. How far such a situation might have been artificially prolonged is a matter of unprofitable speculation. To a large number of politicians in Italy, the Triple Alliance has always been distasteful, the more so as the same reactionary party, which was identified with the Alliance, is held by them responsible for plunging Italy into undertakings beyond her strength and fatal to her prestige.

With the progress of time the anti-clerical party continued to gain ground in France, while democracy has rapidly progressed in Italy. The fear of any intervention on behalf of the Pope has died away, and Extremists in this country see with satisfaction France itself taking the lead in subordinating ecclesiastic authority to the secular arm. Time and the prosperity of the Italian Colony in Tunis have reconciled her to the French occupation, and her ambitions in Tripoli, which for obvious reasons could not be realised for a long period, grew to seem less likely to be thwarted by a friendly than a hostile France. With the disappearance of Signor Crispi from the scene reconciliation became easier.

Four years ago, accordingly, the Tariff war ceased, and the two countries accorded each other most-favoured-nation treatment. . . .

The advent to power of the most democratic Government which Italy has as yet returned to office, owing its majority to the Socialist and Radical vote, accordingly found France in the field as a wooer with certain definite boons to bestow and the old causes of bitterness obliterated by time or circumstance. Something may be due to personal influences. The leanings of the present Minister for Foreign Affairs towards France are perhaps in advance of the general tendencies of the Cabinet, and it has been generally noticed that the present Representative of France in Rome has never missed an opportunity of administering the cordial of flattering attentions and rhetorical courtesies which the Latin nations so much appreciate. It is also remarkable that precisely during the same period there has been a recrudescence and intensification of many minor questions producing irritation with Austria.

Thus national affinities have been reasserted and stimulated, while the half-heartedness of the Italian democracy, which, in this respect, is secretly supported by the Catholic party, for the alliance with the two aristocratic Empires, has become the more apparent. Italy, however, has to consider the importance of renewing her Commercial Treaties with Germany and Austria in 1903, and cannot afford to compromise her improved financial situation. The problem lay in how to maintain her alliance with the Central Powers without endangering the growing cordiality with France. That problem appears to have been satisfactorily solved, since the French Government has accepted Italy's assurance that the alliance contains nothing hostile to France. The necessity for Italy to lean on England for support has naturally diminished in proportion. It is true there were certain benefits which she desired to obtain from England, but England was never exacting, and, by raising the plea that she had been neglected, and making the most of a grievance secretly fomented by the Catholic party, she might count on obtaining all she wanted.

If Italy has then drifted away from her dependence on British support, it has been rather due to the feeling that she no longer stands in such need of it, than because of any tangible grievance which she can advance. The *rapprochement* with France has been the inevitable outcome of developments independent of the good-will or the ill-will of England.

Nevertheless, there is a large and influential party in Italy who, like certain politicians at home, consider that this *rapprochement* with France is with difficulty compatible with that traditional friendship with England in which they have always seen the greatest safeguard for the future of their country. A Catholic reaction is not inconceivable in France, and the fickleness of democracies might at any time modify the trend of public opinion as at present manifested here. Apart, however, from such considerations, there are reasons which make it probable that Italy will not seek to convert the good understanding now existing with France into any closer

relationship or to abandon the advantages of the guarantee which her place in the Triple Alliance secures to her.

It would be difficult for Italy at the present time to stand alone. Historical animosities are slow to be extinguished, and the traditional tendency to irritation with the great Empire on her northern border, might, were the bonds of alliance removed, easily produce a situation in which she would find herself in a position of inferiority. The impression generally prevailing that the Triple Alliance has forced upon Italy the maintenance of exaggerated armaments is not really justified, unless it can be argued that she should resign all pretension to be reckoned among important Powers. She has now consolidated her army Budget for six years, and, though her expenditure is strained to the limit she can afford, her armaments are not altogether what they appear on paper. Some 48 per cent. of her infantry soldiers receive only a partial training on grounds of economy. Her military administrative services are said to be far from efficient, and her railway system is quite incapable of coping with a mobilisation. This, of course, is well known to her allies, but for them the important consideration is probably not the asset of Italy's fighting power but the guarantee that, in case of European complications, she will not endanger Austria's liberty of action by a movement on her flank. This situation is, I understand, equally recognised by military experts in France, who would not be content in an ally with a condition of things which Austria and Germany are ready to overlook. Were Italy to stand alone, or were she at any time to contemplate relations of closer amity with France, she would be obliged to complete her armaments and involve herself in expenditure beyond her means which would upset her Budget and render all prospects of conversion illusory.

It seems probable, therefore, that she will prefer to maintain the double guarantee which the present situation offers her, and peacefully work out the material development of her internal resources.

Whether British interests are disadvantageously affected by this modification in the international relations of Italy is another question. My only object in the present despatch has been to put forward the view which does not appear to have been fully appreciated by the criticism of the House of Commons and the press at home, that the *rapprochement* of Italy and France has been inevitable, and that the fact which, for the present, at any rate, we have to reckon with, is one which we could not, if we wanted, have prevented.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

No. 365.

The Marquess of Lansdowne to Sir F. Bertie.

F.O. Italy 875.

Tel. (No. 97.)

Foreign Office, June 8, 1903.

D. 12.30 P.M.

Papers here state that King of Italy is to visit Paris in July.

The King hopes this may not be true. It would in His Majesty's opinion be unfortunate that King Victor Emanuel should visit Paris so long before his visit to England.

Sir F. Bertie to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Italy 874.

(No. 214.) Very Confidential.

My Lord,

Rome, D. October 20, 1903.

R. October 31, 1903.

I learn from a good source and your Lordship has probably also heard that the reason why the Emperor of Russia gave up his projected visit to Rome was that the Italian Authorities, though ready to guarantee His Majesty's safety at Rome, were unable to give any positive assurances in regard to his journey by the Italian railways.

King Victor Emanuel holds what are generally considered to be very advanced views in matters of internal politics and he has great influence with his present Government in questions of foreign policy. His aim, I believe, is that Italy should be a link between the several Powers of Europe and at the same time remain a partner in the Triple Alliance: that France should have hopes of drawing Italy away from Austria and Germany, and that those two Powers should be made to feel that an understanding between Italy and France and perhaps even with Russia also is possible.

As to England the King probably feels pretty sure that her interests will not seriously clash with those of Italy, and he relies on England standing in the way of French supremacy in the Mediterranean.

A visit by the Emperor of Russia to Rome might have made the relations between Russia and Italy too intimate perhaps for the interests of England and it is therefore not a matter for much regret that the visit has fallen through.

I have, &c.

FRANCIS BERTIE.

II.—THE BALKANS.

No. 367.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1272.

(No. 39.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. February 16, 1898.

R. February 21, 1898.

I have the honour to transmit herewith to your Lordship a Memorandum by Mr. Milbanke of a conversation he had a few days ago with M. de Kállay on affairs in the Balkanic Peninsula.

I saw M. de Kállay myself yesterday, and during the course of some talk I had with him, certainly derived the impression that he looks with considerable anxiety to the fast approaching spring as likely to produce serious complications, and is distrustful—though he avoided explicitly admitting as much—of the drift of Russian action with regard to Eastern affairs.

He is unwilling to believe that the unexpected move made by the Russian Government in taking up the candidature of Prince George of Greece does not screen some ulterior design, at present obscure. That move may, he admits, have been due at first to powerful family influences, but Count Mouravieff, after deferring to those influences, may well have conceived that it could be turned to account for further ends, such for instance as the opening of the Straits to Russian men of war.

I pointed out to M. de Kállay that the theory I had most recently heard sustained on this subject, and certainly by my Russian colleague here, was to the effect that Russia held above all to closing the access of the Black Sea, which she looked upon as her especial domain, to the vessels of war of other countries, and was relatively

indifferent to the entry of her own ships into the Mediterranean. She could not, it seemed to me, hope to obtain the latter without surrendering the exclusive command she now enjoyed of the Euxine. M. de Kállay thought that she could find means of achieving with the Sultan any object she had in view.

As regards the condition of Macedonia, his reports are to the effect that even without any working from the outside the condition of that region is such that an explosion may be looked for at any moment.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

Enclosure in No. 367.

Memorandum by Mr. Milbanke.

(Most Confidential.)

I called a few days ago on M. de Kállay, when, during a long conversation which turned upon a variety of subjects, his Excellency made certain remarks upon the present situation in the Balkan Peninsula and the policy of Russia in that region, which appear to me to be deserving of particular attention in view of the rumours which have recently been current of approaching troubles in Macedonia.

M. de Kállay did not attempt to disguise his anxiety in regard to the rapid manner in which the Macedonian question was ripening. The antagonism between Bulgarians, Servians, and Greeks has attained such proportions that an outbreak, even without extraneous influence, seemed almost inevitable; when this would occur it was difficult to say. He had great fears for the current spring or summer, and, in any case, did not believe it could be delayed beyond next year at the latest.

It had long been clear to him, M. de Kállay continued, that Russia was making every effort to regain the influence she had for some time lost in Bulgaria, and the Bulgarians, being the majority in Macedonia, it was manifest that the Power which backed up Bulgaria would have the advantage in any outbreak, while the policy recently pursued by Russia in regard to Greece would at the same time secure to her the sympathies of the Greek element in the Balkan Peninsula.

His Excellency said that he had been much struck by the persistent manner in which the Russian Government had for a time pressed the candidature of Prince George as Governor of Crete, and could not bring himself to believe that this action had been merely undertaken out of deference to the wishes of the Empress Dowager. He felt convinced that Russia had some ulterior object in view, and was inclined to believe that this object was, by rousing the ambition of the Bulgarians, to bring matters in Macedonia to a head.

But, if this were so, why, M. de Kállay went on, should Russia choose the present moment for raising disturbances in Macedonia? This was a question far more difficult to answer, and one upon which he had come to no definite conclusion, though he could not help thinking himself that the action of the Government of St. Petersburg in this matter was closely connected with the question of the Dardanelles, which, there was not the slightest doubt in his mind, was occupying the attention of Russia at the present moment in the highest degree.

By fostering Bulgarian pretensions in Macedonia with the view of creating a greater Bulgaria, it was obvious that considerable pressure might be exercised on the Porte, while, on the other hand, Russia might then again step in between Turkey and Bulgaria, and in return for its assistance obtain a counter-concession, viz., the opening of the Straits. It was, therefore, quite conceivable that the evidently pro-Bulgarian policy of the Russian Government at the present moment was being undertaken with this ulterior object in view.

Reverting to the question of the Dardanelles, M. de Kállay remarked that he had for some time past been convinced that to attain this object was one of the principal aims of Russian policy. It had, in fact, been confirmed to him by the late Prince Lobanow, who some four or five years ago had plainly said to him that

Constantinople had become a matter of indifference to Russia, but that the opening of the Straits was of vital importance to them. But if it was so important then, was it not doubly so now, in view of the rapid development of affairs in the Far East, and of the fact that some years must still elapse before the Siberian-Chinese Railway was terminated?

Russia's wish to obtain the free passage of the Straits was, M. de Kállay went on to observe, a matter which Austria might look upon with equanimity, as it was, in his own private opinion, a question which had but little importance for this Empire. If, however, the Government of St. Petersburg intended to attain their object by countenancing an outbreak in Macedonia, Austria would be placed in a most difficult position. Between the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy and that province there was but the feeble Kingdom of Servia, while the Sandjak of Novi-Bazar was actually coterminous with it, and it was therefore not necessary to point out the effect which might be produced in Bosnia and the Herzegovina and how serious the aspect would become, all the more so as any rising in Macedonia would in all probability be followed by disturbances in Albania and other parts.

M. de Kállay made but a passing allusion to Servia, saying that he thought King Milan was more likely than any one else to restore order in the neighbouring kingdom. He had always retained his influence in the army, while he was not without a certain authority amongst the population in general. Upon my suggestion that we might still see His Majesty as reigning Sovereign in the place of his son, his Excellency at once replied that he thought this eventuality by no means impossible.

In view of the anxiety expressed by M. de Kállay in regard to the development of affairs in Macedonia, it would have been of special interest to ascertain how far the Austro-Russian *entente* had been affected by the recent policy of the Russian Government. This was a point, however, upon which his Excellency was naturally reticent, and though the tone of his remarks led me to believe that he still hoped that the understanding come to at St. Petersburg would be productive of some good result, he gave me to understand that what he was most afraid of was the secret action of the different Russian agents; this was far more difficult to cope with than to deal openly with the Russian Government.

In reporting the above conversation, I should perhaps add that M. de Kállay did not fail as usual to remind me that he was only speaking as a private individual, and that his remarks were not to be considered as those of a responsible Minister. At the same time, no one in this country is more thoroughly acquainted with affairs in the Balkan Peninsula, the development of which his Excellency always follows with the closest attention.

RALPH MILBANKE.

Vienna, February 15, 1898.

No. 368.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1273.

(No. 139.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. April 28, 1898.

R. May 2, 1898.

In some extracts from the Russian press relating to the action of Austria and Russia in the Balkan Peninsula which M. de Kállay read to me during my visit to him reported in my preceding despatch, allusion was made to a report which appears to have been published in Servian newspapers, to the effect that on the occasion of the approaching Jubilee of the Emperor Francis Joseph, the Emperor William intended to propose that the annexation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina to the Austro-Hungarian Empire should be consented to by the Great Powers.

I accordingly asked M. de Kállay what response he thought would be made by the other Governments to such a proposition, to which His Excellency replied that, independently of Germany, he was of opinion that both England and Italy, and probably France, would readily consent, and that even Russia, without being enthusiastic for the project, was not likely to offer any real objection, while Turkey would limit its action to a note of protest.

I have been unable to ascertain whether there is any foundation for the report in question, but M. de Kállay went on to say that, owing to the complicated internal situation in Austria, and the Parliamentary deadlock, the question of the annexation of the occupied provinces would at the present moment, to say the least, be most inopportune.

The question, whenever it arises, will always be accompanied by especial difficulties, owing to the composition of the dual Monarchy, and as I remember from my conversations with Hungarian statesmen during my residence at Buda-Pesth, the more far-seeing amongst them are not without the hope of a future incorporation of Bosnia in the dominions of the Hungarian Crown, though it is hardly necessary to add that such an arrangement would meet with the strongest opposition at Vienna.

There would at first, indeed, be no need of the question arising as to the division of interests of the two halves of the Empire in the occupied provinces whenever they should be annexed, as they might continue to be governed independently, as they are now, as a kind of dependence to the dual Monarchy, but the mere fact of their annexation would, as M. de Kállay said, necessitate certain measures being sanctioned which would be exceedingly difficult, owing to the impotence of the Austrian Parliament to deal with any legislation at the present moment. In Hungary, his Excellency thought, no difficulties would be raised, owing to the large majority at the disposal of the Government, although, as will be remembered, the Hungarians were among those who were most strenuously opposed to the original occupation of Bosnia and the Herzegovina, in spite of its having been undertaken under the auspices of Count Andrassy.

I have, &c.

RALPH MILBANKE.

No. 369.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1285.

(No. 124.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. May 24, 1899.

My Lord,

R. May 29, 1899.

I had some interesting conversation the other day at the Pesth races with Count Charles Kinsky, Councillor of the Austro-Hungarian Embassy at St. Petersburg, who was lately left in charge for some months, pending the arrival of the new Ambassador, Baron d'Aehrenthal. . . .

With respect to any latent distrust of each other entertained by the two Governments, Count Kinsky was naturally guarded in what he said, though it may be taken for certain, I believe, that as regards the Emperor Francis Joseph, His Majesty preserves what may be called a traditional suspicion of Russia in Eastern affairs, which the experiences of his long reign have not tended to remove.

Count Kinsky observed, with much truth, that the attention of Russia is for the present so entirely absorbed by the furtherance of her interests in the Far East that she is no doubt sincere in her desire to leave matters untouched in the peninsula, and that one may rely on the declarations made by her representatives abroad that she not only harbour no designs against Turkey—and more especially Constantinople—but considers the existing state of things there as that which is best suited to her actual aims and policy. It appears, therefore, to this intelligent Austrian diplomatist that as

long as the present period of suspense, brought about by the sudden developments in the Far East, continues, no important change in the situation in the Levant need be apprehended. Nevertheless, since the settlement of the old Eastern problem cannot be delayed for ever, this Government could not, without risk, relax its customary watchful attitude in Eastern affairs.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

No. 370.

Sir H. Rumbold to the Marquess of Salisbury.

F.O. Austria 1285.

(No. 170.) Confidential.

Vienna, D. July 6, 1899.

My Lord,

R. July 10, 1899.

In the comparatively narrow sphere to which the foreign political interests of this Empire are now restricted, it is but natural that what may be called a reaffirming of the understanding with Russia in eastern affairs which has recently taken place should have attracted much attention and been noted with satisfaction.

The favourable impression thereby produced here was enhanced by the cordial recognition of the value of the agreement in what was looked upon as a semi-official communiqué in the "Herald" of St. Petersburg.

Although the two Imperial Governments concerned no doubt sincerely admit the benefits of the condition of things which has replaced a chronic state of mutual suspicion and rivalry in the Balkans, one need not go very far beneath the surface to realise how much of the old feeling subsists in the minds of those who have most to deal with these delicate affairs. Certainly some conversations I have lately had leave me little doubt on this point.

For instance, on my congratulating Count Kapnist on the smooth working of an agreement which he has personally done much to keep in order, and paying some tribute to Count Goluchowski's share in it, I found my colleague decidedly lukewarm on the subject of the Imperial Minister for Foreign Affairs. There was nothing to complain of in his Excellency, he said, and, on the whole, he did well as far as Russian interests were concerned, but, *au fond*, there was no trusting Austria, and one had always to be on one's guard with her.

M. de Kállay, with whom I have also had some talk, while allowing that the agreement had lately shown to advantage, argued that its success was mainly due to the internal embarrassments of Russia.

On a review of the general circumstances of the two Empires it would seem that the most effectual guarantee of the compact between their Governments is to be looked for in the hampered condition in which both are placed by their respective difficulties, to which, in the case of Russia, must be added the absorbing character of the task in which she is engaged in the Far East.

I have, &c.

HORACE RUMBOLD.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Austria 1311.

(No. 171.) Very Confidential.

Vienna, D. July 4, 1901.

My Lord,

R. July 8, 1901.

During a conversation which I had recently with Baron Budberg, the Russian Secretary of Embassy, who had been here for a great number of years, and is a very old acquaintance of mine, he remarked that in his opinion Count Goluchowski had not been very wise in the observations which he made respecting the Austro-Russian *entente* in the Balkans in his speech to the Delegations. The understanding in question had already rendered excellent service in regard to the maintenance of peace and order in those regions, and he could not help thinking it a mistake that even the slightest impression should be raised that it had lost anything of its efficacy, an impression which, he feared, would doubtless be produced among the Balkan populations by the Austrian Minister's statement.

Our conversation, which was of a private and informal character, then turned on the general subject of Austro-Russian relations, and it was not without interest to note that, in the opinion of a Russian diplomatist, it was the action of the Russian agents in the Balkans which formed a serious obstacle to any real understanding being come to between the two Empires.

Baron Budberg went on to condemn in outspoken terms the action of these gentlemen, who, out of motives of personal vanity, tried to make a name for themselves by Panslavist agitation, which was always sure to meet with approval in certain circles at St. Petersburg, but which was at the same time calculated to considerably embarrass the attempts of more serious diplomatists in favour of a conciliatory policy.

My colleague then proceeded to tell me that a short time ago an attempt had been made by the Russian Embassy here, without official instructions from St. Petersburg, to sound the Austrian Ministry with a view to a franker exchange of views between the two Governments in regard to the future of Macedonia, but that their overtures had met with not the slightest encouragement from Count Goluchowski.

The fact would seem to be that the mutual mistrust entertained for each other by the Governments of Vienna and St. Petersburg is such as to effectually prevent any complete accord being come to between them, a feeling of mistrust which is often, no doubt, thoroughly justified, but which is in certain cases due to exaggerated reports, the foundation for which is not always properly examined.

I cannot say to what extent Baron Budberg's views are shared by his own Government, but they appear to me not without a certain interest in throwing a side-light on the present relations between the two Empires; all the more so as I believe they are fully shared by the Russian Ambassador. Count Kapnist has, indeed, if I am correctly informed, not escaped reproach at St. Petersburg for his Austrian proclivities, but it is certain that he is in favour of a conciliatory policy, and that his efforts have often been directed towards smoothing down causes for friction which have from time to time arisen. It is no wonder, therefore, that he should disapprove the energy of Russian agents in the Balkans, whose object seems to be to increase rather than diminish the differences between the two countries.

I have, &c.

RALPH MILBANKE.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Austria 1311.

(No. 202.) Most Confidential.

Vienna, D. August 27, 1901.

My Lord,

R. September 2, 1901.

During a visit which I paid yesterday to M. de Kállay I found his Excellency somewhat preoccupied by the continued state of unrest in the Balkans, and by the increasing signs of renewed agitation on the part of Russia in those regions. Russian influence, his Excellency remarked, was already supreme in Servia and Bulgaria, not to speak of Montenegro, and now they were carrying their intrigues to Roumania.

The anxiety caused to M. de Kállay by this renewal of Russian activity was, it is needless to add, not diminished by the intimacy between Italy and Montenegro and by Italian intrigues in Albania, of which his Excellency continues to be firmly convinced in spite of the recent semi-official refutation at Rome of the somewhat indiscreet utterances on the subject in certain Italian journals

It was, however, the Macedonian question, M. de Kállay went on to say, which was the matter of the greatest moment to Austria-Hungary. The interests of Servia and Bulgaria in this portion of the Balkans were so divergent that it was difficult to see how they could be brought into harmony, and in the interests of this Empire it was to be earnestly hoped that this would be found an insurmountable difficulty. For if by chance the all-powerful influence of Russia should succeed in forcing Servia and Bulgaria to come to an understanding in regard to their rival claims in the Balkans, and practically establishing a kind of Russian Protectorate from the Black Sea to the Adriatic, such an eventuality would as good as imply the political effacement of Austria-Hungary.

I then remarked to M. de Kállay that it had often been a matter of surprise to me that more serious attempts should not have been made by the Imperial Government to come to a thorough understanding with Russia in regard to their Balkan policy, to which his Excellency replied that this would have been his own personal wish for years past, but that such a policy had not met with the approval of those who would have had to carry it out.

Ten years ago he thought nothing would have been easier; even now he was of opinion that the two Governments could still come to terms, but it was already much more difficult, for the simple reason that this country now had so little it could offer in compensation for any concessions it would be desirous of obtaining from Russia. Every year that passed made Russia more powerful and more independent, and if the Russian Government should succeed, as he had just remarked, in establishing its influence from the Black Sea to the Adriatic, what more could it want from Austria?

In the course of our conversation which embraced a variety of subjects, and which bore a completely private character, I asked M. de Kállay how the renewed intrigues of Russia, to which he had alluded, were to be reconciled with the Austro-Russian understanding which had been come to on the occasion of the Emperor Francis Joseph's visit to St. Petersburg in 1897.

His Excellency replied that I was asking him more than he could answer, for it was a question he often asked himself, from which remark, as well as from others he let drop, it did not require much observation to notice that his Excellency is far from approving the policy of inactivity in the Balkans on the part of Austria, which is being pursued under the auspices of the present Minister for Foreign Affairs.

I have, &c.

RALPH MILBANKE.

Mr. Milbanke to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Austria 1338.

(No. 1.) Confidential.

My Lord,

Vienna, D. January 1, 1903.

R. January 5, 1903.

Count Goluchowski having countermanded his weekly reception yesterday, I have been unable to see his Excellency before the departure of the messenger; but I called last evening on the Under-Secretary and asked him whether he could give me any information in regard to Count Lamsdorff's visit.

Count Lützow replied that the first effect produced by the Russian Minister's conversations with the Emperor and Count Goluchowski had been eminently favourable; that he had inspired the Emperor with confidence and had made an excellent impression on His Majesty, as well as on Count Goluchowski.

With reference to Macedonia, his Excellency said that it had, of course, been impossible yet to go into much detail, but that the two Ministers intended to lose no time in proposing a few reforms which appeared to them most indispensable at the present juncture, and would have to be carried out at once, but which were to be of a purely administrative and non-political character, and I gathered that further less urgent reforms were to be considered later on.

I asked Count Lützow whether anything had been settled in regard to the question of guarantees for the due execution of the proposed measures to which Count Goluchowski had alluded in a recent conversation I had with him; but he said that this was a point which had not yet been agreed upon. In any case, his Excellency continued, any scheme that might be drawn up by Count Lamsdorff and Count Goluchowski would be communicated to the other Powers, though the idea seemed to be that, to save time, it would be preferable that any discussion of the reforms and proposed measures should be left to the Ambassadors at Constantinople, rather than to have recourse to the more cumbersome method of an exchange of views between the different Cabinets.⁽¹⁾

Count Lützow then proceeded to dilate on the cordiality of the relations with Russia, going so far as to say that he did not think during the past hundred years that there had been such a feeling of mutual confidence between the two countries as at the present moment; and, from his Excellency's remarks, as well as from observations made to me by M. de Kallay a few days ago, it appears to me that the Imperial Government intends to endeavour to profit by Count Lamsdorff's visit, and the good feeling which has been established, to extend the Austro-Russian *entente* of 1897 on broader lines and to lay the foundation of a more general understanding between the two Empires.

M. de Kallay remarked to me that he himself had always been in favour of coming to an agreement with Russia (there was still time to do so now), and he considered Count Lamsdorff's visit a grand opportunity which should not be lost, adding that the position of Austria was particularly favourable, owing to the first advances having, on the present occasion, been made by Russia. . . .

I have, &c.

RALPH MILBANKE.

(1) [The conversations between Count Goluchowski and Count Lamsdorff resulted in the so-called February Programme, which, however, failed to avert a revolt in Macedonia in the following summer.]

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Turkey 5271.

(No. 774.) Confidential.

Constantinople, D. November 19, 1903.

My Lord,

R. November 30, 1903.

In my telegram No. 220 of to-day I had the honour to communicate to your Lordship the message I received from the Sultan through His Majesty's Secretary, Izzet Pasha, respecting the new reforms lately presented by the Austrian and Russian Ambassadors,⁽¹⁾ and of my reply to His Majesty's request for their modification, more especially in regard to the first and second paragraphs.

It was with some surprise that I saw Izzet Pasha chosen as the bearer of this communication, as his attitude towards British interests has not been, within recent years, a friendly one. He is, however, the most capable and intelligent, as well as the most unscrupulous, of the Palace Camarilla, whose influence over the Sultan is mostly harmful; but since he came to me as the Sultan's emissary, I thought it politic to receive him with courtesy.

His Excellency began by requesting me, on the part of the Sultan, to consider what he said as strictly confidential.

He then went on to say that His Majesty was in dire trouble between his subjects on one side and the foreign Powers on the other. In fact his position was so terribly difficult that he regarded it as one of life and death, as his acceptance of the reforms now proposed would inevitably lead to the ruin of his sovereign power, and ultimately to the disintegration of the Empire.

The Austrian and Russian Ambassadors had stated that it was entirely owing to their friendly attitude, and out of consideration for His Majesty's sovereign authority, that their Governments had proposed a Mussulman Inspector-General instead of a Christian Governor-General nominated by the European Powers, as suggested by His Majesty's Government, and added that, if their proposals were not accepted, the British suggestions might be adopted.

His Imperial Majesty was unwilling to believe this statement, although he had seen it in the press. He was convinced, on the contrary, that Turkey's old ally did not desire the ruin of the Turkish Empire. His Majesty had, therefore, decided to appeal to me, not as His Majesty's Ambassador, but as a friend and, he believed, an advocate of the integrity of the Empire, to crave your Lordship to bring about some modification of the clauses respecting the appointment of Austrian and Russian Assessors, and of a foreign Commandant of the Gendarmerie. His Majesty objected perhaps even still more to the proposal to recast the territorial delimitations of the vilayets according to races and religion, and to the interference of foreign officers in military matters, although, as their execution was more remote, he did not at this moment lay the same stress on them.

The Sultan was not ignorant of the force of public opinion in England. But it was well to recollect that there was also a public opinion in Turkey evinced, it was true, in a different manner, but which had left its mark in the pages of history. His Majesty had to reckon with the strong prejudices and feelings of his subjects, who had come to believe that the attacks on Mussulman rule in Macedonia were veiled menaces against the Moslem religion, and that it sufficed to be a Mussulman to have the whole of Europe against them. The Sultan implored His Majesty's Government not to encourage a policy based upon hostility to the Moslem race, and it was in this spirit that His Majesty had sent him to me to-day.

I replied that I could not believe for a moment that the Sultan considered His Majesty's Government were wanting in friendly feelings towards the Moslems of Turkey any more than elsewhere. Their policy in India, where there were 60,000,000

⁽¹⁾ [This refers to the Mürzsteg Punctuation or programme of Turkish reforms agreed to by Russia and Austria-Hungary on the 1st October, 1903.]

Mussulmans, proved the contrary, and the King-Emperor had no more loyal and faithful subjects throughout the Empire. The Sultan himself had often borne testimony to the justice of British rule towards the Moslems, and, so far from His Majesty's Government having a different policy towards the Mussulman element in Macedonia, I could assure him that your Lordship had in a recent conversation with one of the foreign Ambassadors laid particular stress upon the necessity of treating the Mussulman in the same way as the Christian population.

Izzet Pasha replied that he feared he had ill-expressed his meaning, as it was far from the Sultan's intention to complain of the way Moslems were treated by England, but the fact remained that the Russian and Austrian proposals must lead, at no distant date, to the exodus of the Mussulman race from European Turkey, and this being so, it was only natural to regard the demands made by the Powers as inimical to their race and religion. In any case, the proposals implied a direct attack upon the authority of the Sultan and upon his sovereign attributes, which His Majesty resented most deeply.

I explained to his Excellency that what His Majesty's Government desired was the cessation of misgovernment and the redress of grievances which were undermining the vital forces of the country, not only in Macedonia, but in other parts of the Empire, but that they had no desire to weaken the authority of the Government, whose assistance was necessary for the introduction of the reforms so urgently needed.

His Majesty's Government were pledged to support the introduction of adequate reforms. It was the price they had paid for the abrogation of the Treaty of San Stefano, and as friends and well-wishers of Turkey, they ardently desired to see measures taken to check the administrative disorganisation which was endangering the stability and existence of the Empire. The Sultan had not been misinformed about a Christian Governor-General. It was an alternative proposal, not made with an unfriendly feeling towards His Imperial Majesty, but rather as possibly offering a solution of the dangers and difficulties attending the political situation. If, however, His Imperial Majesty disliked the suggestion, and desired to avoid its repetition, he ought to accept the present proposals of the Austrian and Russian Ambassadors. In fact, they seemed to His Majesty's Government the minimum of what was required. I asked him to tell the Sultan most respectfully that I was convinced His Majesty could do nothing more calculated to restore and maintain his authority throughout Macedonia than to give his sanction and support to the establishment of a corps of gendarmerie well paid, well disciplined, able to maintain public tranquillity, and at the same time sure to inspire general confidence among the inhabitants from the fact of their being under the inspection and control of expert and experienced foreign officers.

Izzet Pasha said that he would faithfully report my language to the Sultan, although he was afraid I would greatly disappoint His Majesty, who had counted upon some form of assistance from the ancient and traditional friendship between the two countries. Indeed, His Majesty had told him to remind me of his offer to send ten thousand soldiers to South Africa at a moment when we seemed to be in some straits, and to tell me that if His Majesty's Government had shown any inclination to accept assistance, His Majesty was quite decided to send out a whole army corps of his best troops. His Majesty's Government would not, His Majesty was sure, now be unmindful of the goodwill he had shown on this, as also on other occasions. If His Majesty's Government complied with His Majesty's present request, I might rely upon his gratitude, on his following their advice in the future, and upon the immediate settlement of all questions in which His Majesty's Embassy was interested.

I replied that I hoped he had not come to try and strike a bargain after His Majesty's Government had promised to support the Austro-Russian proposals, and that our interest in the maintenance of the authority of the Sultan and the integrity of the Ottoman Empire was, as he justly said, a political tradition, but that it depended upon certain conditions. The inherent force of the Empire could only be maintained and developed by an improved system of government, based upon liberty, progress and

justice. His Majesty's Government had had an unpleasant experience of Turkish assurances, and they were reluctantly compelled to ask for execution rather than rely upon mere promises.

As regarded the goodwill shown towards me personally by the Sultan during the time I had had the honour of representing my august Sovereign at His Imperial Majesty's Court, I was extremely grateful. At the same time, I did not admit that my Government had any special reason to be satisfied with the way British interests had been treated. I instanced my meaning by referring to several current affairs, amongst which I named the interminable delays connected with the Aden delimitation, the refusal to grant a concession for the prolongation of the Smyrna-Aidin Railway, and special telegraph wire to Fao, &c. The less he said about following the advice of His Majesty's Government the better, for he was too conversant with the state of affairs not to admit that if their advice had been taken the position of Turkey would be very different to what it was to-day. I could only repeat that His Majesty's Government supported the plan of reforms, believing they were in the interests of Turkey and that their refusal might lead to serious danger.

Izzet Pasha said that, whether I believed him or not, he could assure me that he had always been an advocate of an alliance with England; that in respect to the observations I had made regarding the way the interests and representations of my Government had been treated, he was bound to admit that my remarks were fully justified, but that he had nevertheless received my reply with a heavy heart.

In conclusion, he said that His Majesty had desired him to inform me that the Imperial Iradé recognising El Ukla as within the nine cantons would be issued in a few days.

I begged him to convey to the Sultan my respectful thanks for this communication, and to assure His Imperial Majesty that in giving him the advice I had ventured to offer I was actuated by a conviction that the suggested course was, under present circumstances, the best for His Imperial Majesty himself and for his Empire.

I have, &c.

N. R. O'CONOR.

No. 375.

Sir N. O'Connor to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

Constantinople, November 25, 1903.

F.O. Turkey 3272.

D. 6 P.M.

Tel. (No. 224.)

R. 7 P.M.

Macedonia.

The Porte replied to the Austrian and Russian Ambassadors to-day accepting the Macedonian reforms in principle.

(Repeated to Vienna and Sophia.)

III.—AFGHANISTAN.

No. 376.

Memorandum communicated by the Russian Embassy, February 6, 1900.

F.O. Russia 1613.

Les rapports de la Russie avec l'Afghanistan ont été définis par les arrangements intervenus en 1872 et 1873 entre les Cabinets de Saint-Pétersbourg et de Londres. En vertu de ces arrangements qui sont encore en vigueur, la Russie reconnaît que l'Afghanistan est entièrement en dehors de sa sphère d'action.

Le Cabinet Impérial s'est strictement conformé à ce principe, sauf une seule exception peu importante. La situation des affaires était trop troublée à l'époque de la dernière guerre Orientale pour admettre l'application rigoureuse du système convenu. Le Gouvernement Britannique a reconnu lui-même d'ailleurs le bien-fondé de cette déviation passagère. La Russie n'a pas tardé à reprendre son attitude primitive. Elle a fait davantage. Bien qu'elle n'eût renoncé qu'à l'exercice d'une action *politique* dans l'Afghanistan, elle a consenti, guidée par un sentiment d'intérêt amical à l'égard de la Grande-Bretagne, à s'abstenir, dans des circonstances données, même de rapports non-politiques ainsi que de l'échange des manifestations de courtoisie qui sont généralement d'usage entre des États voisins dans ces contrées.

Tel a été le cas notamment dans les années '80 et les suivantes. Les relations de l'Angleterre avec le nouvel Émir ne s'étaient pas encore bien établies. Abdourrahman-Khan lui-même n'avait pas pris d'assiette dans son pays; ses rapports les plus simples avec la Russie auraient pu être mal interprétés soit par la population indigène, soit aux Indes, et conduire ainsi à des malentendus.

D'autre part, la Russie, à cette époque, n'était pas limitrophe de l'Afghanistan, ses relations commerciales avec ce pays étaient circonscrites de leur nature et par conséquent les concessions faites à l'Angleterre n'imposaient pas aux intérêts Russes des sacrifices permanents.

Mais, depuis lors, les circonstances se sont sensiblement modifiées. L'Angleterre a consolidé sa situation à Caboul. L'Afghanistan pacifié et constitué en État organisé, a établi des rapports réguliers de commerce avec les contrées voisines. Après les travaux de délimitation des années 1885 et 1895, et par suite aussi de l'unification du système économique de la Russie avec celui du Boukhara, les frontières Russo-Afghanes ont une étendue de plusieurs centaines de verstes. L'action civilisatrice de la Russie et de l'Angleterre dans l'Asie Centrale commençait vers cette même époque à porter fruit: la tranquillité régnant dans l'Afghanistan, le développement du bien-être dans les provinces Russes contiguës et surtout la construction de la voie ferrée trans-caspienne ont eu pour effet un progrès remarquable dans la fréquence des relations commerciales. Des marchands Afghans se transportent aujourd'hui en nombre considérable sur le territoire Russe, tandis que des indigènes Boukhares et des sujets Russes se rendent en Afghanistan. Le contact de la vie commune se multiplie de plus en plus sur la frontière.

Il est tout naturel que cet état de choses, ainsi que le signalent les autorités locales et douanières Russes, ait fait surgir toute une série nouvelle de questions ayant trait aux intérêts réciproques des sujets de ces différents pays. Le règlement de ces questions devient de jour en jour plus difficile par suite des rapports limités avec les autorités Afghanes. Parfois, il est même irréalisable grâce à la concentration de toutes les affaires dans les mains de l'Émir et à l'absence de rapports directs avec le Gouvernement de Caboul.

Une pareille situation est entièrement anormale. Elle ne saurait se prolonger sans détriment pour les intérêts de la Russie et même de l'Angleterre. Le cours régulier des communications et des affaires entre des Puissances limitrophes ne peut se maintenir que sous la condition d'une fixation précise de leurs rapports réciproques. L'absence d'une pareille organisation laissant en souffrance les exigences légitimes de la population locale, donne lieu à une situation artificielle et crée une atmosphère de

méfiance et de malaise qui ne saurait à la longue ne pas conduire à des complications regrettables.

Des tentatives ont été faites, il est vrai, pour régler les rapports de frontière avec l'Afghanistan par la voie d'une entente entre les Cabinets de Saint-Petersbourg et de Saint-James, mais ces efforts n'ont pas abouti. Il suffirait pour s'en convaincre de se rappeler la contestation relative aux canaux de Bossaga qui a manqué soulever une question de droit international et a fini par être tranchée grâce à des circonstances favorables, par une simple explication entre les anciens de village. Aussi les autorités des deux côtés de la frontière, reconnaissant l'impossibilité de se passer de rapports directs, ont-ils tâché de recourir à l'expédient d'arrangements privés pour écarter les malentendus et trancher les litiges de peu d'importance se produisant dans leur ressort. Dans les dernières années, ces espèces d'arrangements ou de compromis se sont répétées assez fréquemment. Il faut dire également que les témoignages de politesse et de courtoisie qui s'échangent de loin en loin entre le Chef de la Région Transcaspienne et le Gouverneur Général de Hérat ont contribué à détendre la situation sur la frontière et à y maintenir la tranquillité.

Mais ce ne sont là que des palliatifs. Ils ne répondent évidemment plus, on ne saurait se faire d'illusion, à une situation créée par le développement croissant des rapports réciproques. Le temps paraîtrait donc venu de faire un pas définitif dans la régularisation des rapports de la Russie avec l'Afghanistan. En conséquence, le Gouvernement Impérial croit de son devoir de porter à la connaissance du Cabinet de Londres qu'il regarde comme indispensable le rétablissement des rapports directs entre la Russie et l'Afghanistan pour ce qui concerne les affaires de frontière. Ces rapports n'auront aucun caractère politique. Le Gouvernement Impérial maintient ses arrangements antérieurs et continue à considérer l'Afghanistan comme étant en dehors de la sphère d'influence de la Russie.

L'introduction d'un ordre régulier dans les rapports avec l'Afghanistan exercera certainement l'effet le plus salutaire sur le raffermissement des relations d'amitié entre la Russie et l'Angleterre. L'expérience du passé en sert de garantie. En effet, que d'inquiétudes et d'alarmes se sont rattachées dans le temps aux questions de la délimitation Afghane. Et pourtant à peine cette délimitation était-elle terminée, que toutes ces agitations se sont évanouies pour faire place à l'apaisement le plus complet. Nul incident de frontière ne s'est produit depuis lors.

Il en sera sans doute de même dans le cas actuel, et le Gouvernement Impérial se flatte de l'espoir que le Cabinet de St. James accueillera la présente communication dans le même esprit amical qui l'a dictée et qu'il prêter son concours à la réalisation de la tâche également importante pour les deux Gouvernements de la consolidation de l'ordre et de la paix dans l'Asie Centrale.

Le 25 Janvier (6 Février), 1900.

No. 377.

Mr. Spring-Rice to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Russia 1727.

(No. 326.) Confidential.

My Lord,

St. Petersburg, D. October 12, 1903.

R. October 19, 1903.

I have the honour to transmit herewith to Your Lordship a précis which I requested Mr. Parker to prepare, for the use of His Majesty's Embassy, of the correspondence relative to Russo-Afghan relations since February 1900.

On that date the Russian Government informed Her Majesty's Government in writing that while it considered the arrangements of 1872 and 1873 as still in force, and recognised Afghanistan as entirely outside the sphere of Russian action, it

considered it indispensable to re-establish direct relations between Russia and Afghanistan as far as concerned frontier affairs. The note explained that this indispensable necessity had arisen in consequence of the changed condition of affairs since the date when the arrangement of 1872 and 1873 was concluded.

The correspondence has added nothing essential, so far as Russia is concerned, to the above declaration. The Russian Ambassador has indeed warned His Majesty's Government against asking for a precise definition of the terms of the note.

In order therefore to arrive at a judgment as to what was the real signification of the note, it is necessary to look to experience. The experience of the last few years shows first that Russian officials have, as a matter of fact, been in continual communication with Afghan officials, and that some of these communications were undoubtedly of a political character. It also shows that the Russian Government itself regards the reparation of the frontier pillars,—a question in the highest degree of a political character—as a matter for direct understanding between the Russian and Afghan authorities. When pressed as to this matter the Russian Government has refused to make a direct reply, but has informed His Majesty's Government that it considers the correspondence as closed. Experience therefore proves that the views of Great Britain and those of Russia as to what is the meaning of the term “non-politique” are radically different.

In the final notification made by the Russian Government it is expressly stated that their objections to the English proposals for joint delimitation were not based on the fact of the communication of the original note of 1900, but on the changed condition of affairs on the frontier. That is to say, that the Russian Government had no intention of entering into a discussion with a view to the definition of the term which is an essential part of the original communication.

As to the future, it is clear from the verbal and written communications of the Russian Government that it does not consider itself bound to respect the arrangements made between Afghanistan and England which precluded direct political relations, and, though there is no present intention to enter into such relations, it expressly reserves the right to send agents into Afghanistan in the future.

It appears therefore that in making the communication of 1900 the Russian Government had no desire to enter into negotiations with the British Government as to their future relations with Afghanistan, but merely made a formal notification of their intentions.

Your Lordship will recollect that the same procedure was followed with regard to Batoum in the year 1886. The Russian Government then notified to Her Majesty's Government that it considered the Russian declaration made at the Berlin Congress as no longer suited to the changed condition of affairs: and that Batoum had ceased to be a free port. The notification was accompanied by the statement that, as Batoum would remain essentially a commercial port, the situation would not be changed. Since that date, as Your Lordship is aware, Batoum has been strongly fortified.

In view of the above considerations, I venture to submit that there is little to be gained by further correspondence with the Russian Government. It is useless to appeal to the understanding between Great Britain and Afghanistan which Count Lamsdorff has expressly stated as not binding on Russia. It is also useless to insist on a definition of the term “non-politique” made in the Russian communication of 1900, because facts have proved that our view of its meaning is widely divergent from that of the Russian Government.

The correspondence may be summed up in one sentence: Russia has notified her intention of sending, when she pleases, her agents into Afghanistan.

When the right is exercised, she will then attempt in Afghanistan the policy pursued with such success towards Turkey, Persia, China, and Corea: that is, while respecting and defending their formal independence, to acquire a predominant influence in the councils of the Government.

I have, &c.

C. SPRING-RICE.

Enclosure in No. 377.

Précis by Mr. Parker on the Subject of Russo-Afghan Relations.

On February 6th 1900 a memorandum on Russo-Afghan relations, of which the following is a summary, was communicated to Lord Salisbury by the Russian Embassy in London :—

Russo-Afghan relations have been defined by the arrangements of 1872 and 1873, which Russia regards as still being in vigour, and as placing Afghanistan entirely outside her sphere of action. Although Russia's obligations only bind her to refrain from *political* action, she has, except in the case of a transient deviation from the correct standard of diplomatic action, consented in the past, from a feeling of friendly interest towards Great Britain, to forego even non-political relations. This attitude was formerly possible without material loss to Russian interests, but the situation has now become entirely abnormal owing to the creation in 1885 of a coterminous Russo-Afghan frontier of several hundred versts in extent and to the completion of the Transcaspian Railway. The regular course of communications and business between limitrophe Powers can only be maintained "*sous la fixation précise de leurs rapports réciproques,*" and the absence of such an organisation creates an atmosphere of uneasiness and mistrust bound eventually to lead to regrettable complications. Moreover attempts to settle frontier questions by means of a reference to the British Government have proved abortive.

The moment would accordingly appear to have come when a definite step should be taken in the regularisation of these relations, and the Imperial Government considers it its duty to inform the Cabinet of London that it regards the re-establishment of direct frontier relations between the two Powers as indispensable; these relations "*n'auront aucun caractère politique*"; and the Imperial Government continues to consider Afghanistan as being outside Russia's sphere of influence and adheres to its former "*arrangements.*"

The Imperial Government flatters itself with the belief that the Cabinet of St. James' will receive this communication in the friendly spirit in which it is made, and will help to bring about the consolidation of peace and order in Central Asia which is equally important in the interests of both Governments.

Lord Salisbury informed M. Lessar that the memorandum of the Russian Government would at once be sent to the Government of India, but that he would abstain from discussing its contents until the opinion of the Viceroy had been received.

On February 22nd 1900 the Russian Political Agent at Bokhara addressed a letter to a trading Agent of the Ameer, who was in Bokhara for the sole purpose of selling hides :—

After explaining that certain movements of troops in Transcaspia had only taken place in order to test the capacity of the Railway, the writer observes that these movements attracted attention principally because they chanced to coincide with the time when England "*was suffering continual reverses, which still continue, in her war with the little state of the Transvaal.*" M. Ignatieff gives the assurance that from the time when the boundaries were fixed, no disagreement had arisen between the inhabitants of the respective frontiers; and he concludes by sincerely desiring that his letter might prove the first step towards the establishment of direct friendly relations between Russia and Afghanistan, and be productive in opening up Afghan territory to mutual trade; by deploring the insignificance of Russo-Afghan commercial relations being confined to petty trade at frontier posts; and finally, by expressing the hope that the Ameer would favour him with some communications, promising in such an event to make it his first aim to transmit them to St. Petersburg.

The Ameer complained of this proceeding to the Government of India.

The Government of India, in a despatch dated May 17th, 1900, commented at some length on the Russian Memorandum: the following epitome of their reply to a request for detailed views only includes the more salient points discussed:—

We note with satisfaction that the Russian Government summarises the arrangements of 1872 and 1873 in the pledge that “Afghanistan is entirely outside the sphere of Russian action.” These engagements were, however, explicitly renewed in 1874, 1876, 1878, 1885, 1887 and 1888, the later of these assurances being subsequent to the date when Russo-Afghan boundaries became coterminous. To this chain of frequently renewed obligations must now be added the date of 1900. Rarely, if ever, has a formal and voluntary engagement been invested, by dint of constant reiteration, with greater solemnity or a more binding force.

From these historical references the Memorandum passes to a discussion of the present situation as affected by the recent changes, basing its case for direct relations on three pleas:—

(a.) The inadequacy of present means of regulating commercial relations through a reference to the British Government.

The sole case cited is that of the Bosaga Canal incident, which occurred as far back as 1891, and Her Majesty's Government failed to bring about the desired solution only because of the spontaneous action of the Russian Government. The evidence supplied does not, therefore, seem to warrant the unqualified assertion that attempts to settle questions by this means have proved abortive.

(b.) The number of frontier disputes which are difficult of solution on the spot.

This contention is in direct conflict with a passage in M. Ignatieff's letter of February 22nd, 1900:—

“From the time our boundaries were fixed, no disagreement has arisen between the authorities and inhabitants of our respective frontiers.”

(c.) The alleged great development of commercial relations, a statement which is also not in harmony with M. Ignatieff's regret that:—

“For reasons unknown to us, the Afghan Government does all it can to hinder peaceful intercourse with Russia, and commercial relations are consequently insignificant and confined to petty trade at frontier posts.”

This conclusive Russian testimony deprives the arguments for the projected change of any great value.

Passing from grounds of proposal to proposal itself, we are confronted, owing to the ambiguous language employed, by the difficulty of understanding exactly what it is intended by its originators to be. “Re-establishment of direct relations” may mean reinstitution of a Russian Envoy at Cabul, such as was attempted in 1878. Such a scheme contravenes the assurance of Prince Gortchakoff to Sir A. Buchanan in 1869, and has not existed before except in “the transient deviation from the correct standard of diplomatic action of 1878.”

Assuming however that the proposal contemplates the presence of a Russian Envoy at Cabul, it behoves us to examine it carefully from the point of view of British and Indian interests.

The desired relations are, we are assured, to have no political character. It would however be impossible for any Agent, and especially a Russian, to divorce himself from a political character and attributes,—a point amply demonstrated by the tone of M. Ignatieff's letter, and by the fact that a Russian Envoy means a Russian guard, which is, in Oriental eyes, a political symbolism. Moreover, if the envoy is insulted it is a political injury, and, in the interests of India at any rate, we are most unwilling that Russia should incur this risk and its possible consequences.

The inevitable result of a Russian Envoy's presence would be the growth of a condominium at Cabul, and would ultimately involve the sacrifice of the exclusive

control by Great Britain of Afghan external policy—the sole *quid pro quo* for British outlay and engagements; while if the Government of India made the suggested proposal to the Ameer, he would regard it as evidence of culpable weakness.

As custodians of the peace and security of India, we deprecate, with all the earnestness in our power, any alteration in the *status quo*.

If however, as seems unlikely, the memorandum contemplates the residence of a Russian Agent, not at Cabul, but at Herat or elsewhere, to communicate with the Governor on trade and frontier matters, we do not think we need refuse to lay such a proposal before the Ameer, though not as carrying with it in any degree our approval or consent. It would involve the residence, at the same spot, of a British Agent, who would be consulted by the Governor, and have full cognizance of the Russian representations. We do not think however that the Ameer would consent to entertain such a proposal.

We would suggest that, in view of the doubt which exists as to the exact interpretation of the Russian proposal, the Russian Government might be invited to explain more clearly the means by which it would propose to attain the desired non-political objects. It would be for Her Majesty's Government to decide whether they would accompany any such invitation by a statement of the insuperable obstacles to direct Russian representation at Cabul.

On November 30th Sir C. Scott was instructed to mention to Count Lamsdorff the subject of M. Ignatieff's letter; he was to state that the Government of India had received a complaint from the Ameer on the subject; and that Her Majesty's Government hoped enquiry would be made into it, and instructions given to prevent the recurrence of such communications; he was to add that Lord Salisbury had been unwilling to trouble Count Lamsdorff with representations at the time when the incident became known to them, shortly after the death of Count Mouravieff, and when the disorders in China were absorbing attention.

Instructions were added for Sir C. Scott's guidance in the event of Count Lamsdorff attempting to reopen the discussion respecting the establishment of direct relations.

Sir C. Scott reported on January 31st 1901 that he had acted on his instructions. Count Lamsdorff had characterised M. Ignatieff's letter as "highly improper," and was loth to credit that discreet official with having written or inspired it. He promised to enquire into the matter without delay.

Count Lamsdorff made no allusion to the general subject of Russo-Afghan relations.

On October 8th the Russian Government addressed a memorandum to Mr. Hardinge in which it was sought to justify M. Ignatieff's action as having been provoked by the request of the Ameer's Agent for explanations in regard to the movements of Russian troops, and as being based on the memorandum of February 1900. "Dès lors le Gouvernement Russe n'avait pas manqué de prendre des mesures en conséquence."

The India Office, in a letter dated December 4th 1901, exposed the objections to leaving the whole question indefinitely in its actual position.

On January 29th 1902 Sir C. Scott was furnished with very full instructions as to the language he was to hold 1st, on the tone of M. Ignatieff's letter; 2nd, on the fact of that letter ever having been written, such an action certainly not partaking of a non-political character, and, 3rd (in words which His Excellency was to communicate to Count Lamsdorff verbatim) on the general question of direct relations between Russia and Afghanistan.

In the latter part of these instructions it was explained that His Majesty's Government did not wish to contend that there was no force in the Russian arguments for direct communications on matters of local detail, but that, as having charge of Afghan foreign relations, they held that arrangements for the purpose could only be made with their consent. The Russian Government was accordingly invited to explain more precisely the method for exchanging the proposed communications, the limitations

to be placed on them, and the means of insuring the observance of those limitations. His Majesty's Government were prepared to consider in the most friendly spirit any communication which might be made to them on the subject.

Sir C. Scott, in an interview on February 3rd 1902, read to Count Lamsdorff the whole of the above despatch, and communicated a copy of the passages respecting the general question.

With regard to the general question Count Lamsdorff merely observed that he had never understood why the British Government had exclusive control of the external relations of the Ameer. His Majesty's Ambassador accordingly handed him a list of the Russian assurances on this point.

In a "Notice" of February 7th 1902, Count Lamsdorff sought to justify M. Ignatieff's motives, stating however that he had instructed him that it would be better that matters not specially bearing on the question of direct relations between the two States should not be introduced into his letters.

No allusion was made to the general question, which formed the more important part of the communication made to Count Lamsdorff, and Sir C. Scott was informed that until the precise explanation was received His Majesty's Government could, of course, not take into consideration any change in the existing arrangements. As to the tone of M. Ignatieff's letter, it was not proposed to pursue that part of the question.

Sir C. Scott spoke to Count Lamsdorff in the sense of the above despatch, and added that he had done so on his own authority, but that he had no instructions to press for explanations at the present moment, having only mentioned the matter in case Count Lamsdorff had any communication to make. His Excellency remained quite silent.

On October 31st a despatch was addressed to Mr. Hardinge with instructions to communicate a copy of it to the Ministry for Foreign Affairs with a request that, in order to prevent any possible risk of misunderstanding, it might be forwarded to Count Lamsdorff. The following is an extract from the concluding passages :—

"As Count Lamsdorff is absent in the Crimea, I propose to defer any attempt to discuss the subject until the arrival in this country of the new Russian Ambassador.

"It is desirable, however, that it should be clearly understood that, while willing to consider the question in the most friendly spirit, His Majesty's Government would object to any change being made in the system hitherto observed without their previous consent, and would regard any attempt at such a change as a departure from the understanding between the two Governments, and a contravention of the repeated assurances of the Russian Government that they consider Afghanistan to be entirely outside the sphere of their influence."

Mr. Hardinge carried out his instructions on November 4th.

The following passage is from a communiqué to the "*Novoe Vremya*" of December 19th 1902, which emanated from the Russian Foreign Office, though Count Lamsdorff subsequently stated that it lacked his personal official sanction.

"In regard to our relations to Afghanistan, it must be remarked that in this matter we made no request to the London Cabinet, but that we merely intimated our decision to enter into direct relations with Afghanistan in consequence of altered circumstances. No further explanations have taken place on this subject."

Sir C. Scott considered the outlook as somewhat discouraging, as affording no symptom of any desire on the part of Russia to avert the possibility of a conflict of interests by an early and frank exchange of views.

(In order to keep the two questions as far as possible distinct, the correspondence during 1903 has, for the purpose of this précis, been divided into two parts, (A) that concerning the general question, and (B) that having relation to the actual course of events on the frontier.⁽¹⁾)

(A.)

In conversation with Count Lamsdorff on January 17th 1903 Sir C. Scott repeated previous explanations as to the attitude of His Majesty's Government.

Count Lamsdorff was of opinion that the views of the Russian Government had been stated with sufficient clearness in their original memorandum to render necessary [*sic*] any further discussion or explanations. He argued that it was impossible for Russia to continue bound by all the old assurances given under different circumstances. It was scarcely compatible with the dignity of an independent Power like Russia to bind herself for all time by engagements with another Power placing limitations on her legitimate intercourse with a neighbouring country.

On February 5th 1903 a memorandum was received by Sir C. Scott in answer to the enquiry as to what matters were to form the subject of direct relations between Russia and Afghanistan, and as to the means by which these relations would be carried on. In view of the detailed memorandum of February 1900, the Ministry for Foreign Affairs did not hold it necessary to enter into communications on the subject, the more so as the details of the matter could only be determined in accordance with the results of experience; the Ministry could not however but lay down that the relations which existed up to 1900 must be given an open straightforward character, which, "it goes without saying, does not exclude the possibility of sending Agents into Afghanistan in the future." In conclusion, it was the duty of the Ministry to declare that it by no means intended to give a political character to the question, and that the despatch of Agents to Afghanistan was "at present not yet contemplated."

On March 24th 1903 Lord Lansdowne referred in conversation with Count Benckendorff to the Afghan question, which he had mentioned to him briefly on a previous occasion. After observing that the matter then stood where it had been left by the Russian memorandum of the previous month, His Lordship reminded Count Benckendorff that His Majesty's Government had requested that, before acquiescing in any such arrangement or approaching the Ameer on the subject, they should be furnished with some more precise and definite explanation in regard to the method and channel of the communications contemplated by the Russian Government. Lord Lansdowne was most anxious to guard against such incidents, assuredly of a political character, as M. Ignatieff's letter, and suggested to His Excellency that His Majesty's Government might possibly be content to leave matters where they had been left by the above-mentioned memorandum, provided they were given an assurance that, before any new departure were made, the question should be again fully discussed, in all its bearings, by the two Governments. His Majesty's Government were fully prepared to deal with the subject in a reasonable and conciliatory spirit; but they objected to a disturbance of the *status quo*, to the maintenance of which Russia was deeply committed, without previous consultation between the two Powers.

Count Benckendorff asked if the "new departure" referred only to the despatch of Russian Agents to Afghanistan, or whether it also included direct correspondence between frontier officials, which, he believed, it was impossible to prevent.

Lord Lansdowne replied that of the two steps the former seemed to him the most questionable; but, before giving a decided answer on these points, he would confer with the India Office in regard to trans-frontier correspondence, under which he understood to be meant correspondence of an unquestionably non-political character, between local officials, on matters of merely local interest.

(1)[(B) not reproduced as too detailed.]

After this interview His Lordship forwarded to Count Benckendorff a memorandum of the substance of the conversation, which was sent to Count Lamsdorff.

Count Benckendorff addressed a private letter to Lord Lansdowne on the following day (March 26th). In order to preclude all misunderstanding, he began by making it clear that since he had received a copy of the memorandum of February 1903, he had had no instructions, nor was he authorised to enter into fresh negotiations on the subject.

He wished to emphasise two points in his conversation of the preceding day : 1st, The extreme difficulty and danger, even of disturbing the friendly relations which then existed between the two Countries, of attempting a special definition of the direct relations contemplated. The original Russian memorandum contained the exact formula of the nature of those relations,—to go further would, in the opinion of the Imperial Ministry, be to provoke, not to avoid divergency of appreciations. The same remarks might apply to a discussion concerning the eventual despatch of an Agent to Afghanistan ; 2nd, The fact that the Imperial Cabinet held that it was not in virtue of the agreements of 1872 and 1873, but spontaneously, that Russia had consented to forgo direct relations. It seemed evident that, under the altered conditions of the present time, two coterminous States without direct relations could scarcely be conceived.

Lord Lansdowne fully understood His Excellency's inability, without further instructions, to enter into fresh negotiations. In the meanwhile he wished to point out to him that, according to his reading, M. Lessar's memorandum did not, as His Majesty's Government understood it, announce the resumption of direct relations, but merely intimated that such relations had, in the opinion of the Russian Government, become indispensable.

He had always recognised the difficulty of precisely defining the limits of those relations, but it was surely more dangerous to leave those limits undefined with the possibility that the question at issue might one day present itself as one of fact rather than of theory. As to the question of Russian Agents, His Lordship referred to the suggestion he had made in conversation.

In the course of these personal and tentative discussions, Lord Lansdowne had avoided any admission of the right of Russia to send such Agents into Afghanistan.

The Government of India considered local correspondence, though not without danger, feasible under certain conditions.

Lord Lansdowne mentioned to Count Benckendorff that it would be impossible to make any arrangement with regard to trans-frontier relations without the concurrence of the Ameer—a fact which explained His Lordship's desire for a previous clear understanding between the two Governments.

His Excellency entirely concurred, adding that the object of the original overture made by M. Lessar was to secure the "appui" of His Majesty's Government in securing such an arrangement.

Lord Lansdowne suggested that the Ameer should be approached for his views. A communication setting forth the objections of His Highness would go far to strengthen the hands of His Majesty's Government in future discussion with the Russian Government.

The Government of India, presuming that general negotiations were in suspense, submitted that it would be for His Majesty's Government to decide whether the next step should be as foreshadowed in the Foreign Office letter of April 4th 1903, to make a formal communication to the Russian Government, which however would be affected by the Ameer's expression of his views in his letter of July 28th 1903, in which His Highness conveys the assurance that he will not himself confer with the Russian Government, and protests against the action of their officials.

IV.—ABYSSINIA.

No. 378.

Sir R. Rodd to the Marquess of Lansdowne.

F.O. Abyssinia 48.

(No. 184.) Confidential.

Rome, D. September 6, 1903.

My Lord,

R. September 14, 1903.

The Minister for Foreign Affairs handed me a confidential memorandum, copy and translation of which is enclosed herewith, in reply to the memorandum communicated by His Majesty's Ambassador as reported in his despatch No. 128 of the 20th June last.

A careful study of this memorandum which His Excellency asked me to regard as extremely confidential convinced me that there were several points in it which required more ample explanation than they received in the text, and I consequently took it back this afternoon to the Foreign Office and discussed its contents with Admiral Morin and with Signor Agnesa, the head of the Colonial department, who is responsible for the drafting.

The memorandum opens by rehearsing the support which the Italian agent has given to the Railway policy of the British Representative in Abyssinia, and the successful results which their cooperation has secured. As the spirit in which this subject is approached rather suggested the recording of a claim to gratitude, to be used as an argument for favours to come, I reminded His Excellency as well as Signor Agnesa, that it had been pointed out in the memorandum submitted by Sir F. Bertie that no conclusion had yet been come to with regard to a railway from Berbera or Zeila to Harrar, and therefore we were not in a position to ask for their support to such a scheme, while the general principle of the extinction of monopolising clauses in railway concessions in Abyssinia was as much an Italian as a British interest. Signor Agnesa protested against the supposition that the memorandum in any sense contemplated the idea of a bargain, and said that it was an understanding conveying reciprocal benefits which they held it so important to conclude.

Having so far cleared the ground we passed to the consideration of the concrete proposals contained in the three paragraphs at the end of the memorandum. Your Lordship will observe that the Italian Government contend that the matters upon which they desire a definite agreement are independent of the actual situation in Somaliland, and they press very strongly for the immediate consideration of their proposals, adding that if an understanding cannot be arrived at they will have to take their own measures independently to secure the development of their colonies. I asked Admiral Morin what this phrase really implied. He said that it meant, if we could not see our way to meeting them on the question of the southern frontier of Abyssinia, they would have to instruct their representative to do his best for them independently of us. Signor Agnesa also confirmed this interpretation of a sentence which, I told him, had read to me when I first saw it, rather like the presentation of a disagreeable alternative. He begged me not to think there were any veiled meanings or innuendos in the memorandum. It was only a straightforward attempt to put plainly before us what they very earnestly hoped we should agree to.

With regard to the three concrete propositions, I told the Minister that I could as yet offer no opinion as to what Your Lordship's views might be on these particular points, but that it appeared to me a pity to have brought the matters referred to in paragraph 2 into the present discussion. In the first place, so far as I was aware there was at present no scheme in contemplation for a line of railway to Kassala. The only scheme for which even preliminary studies were in contemplation was a line from Berbera to Suakim. The proposal here put forward in a concrete form appeared to me very premature. With regard to a more favourable commercial régime with the Soudan, we had only eighteen months ago drawn up a Convention which was the result of long discussions, and I did not myself see how the Soudan could do any more than

she had done, especially as Eritrea was unable to make any concessions on one of the few commodities which the Soudan might be able to send her, namely, sugar. The introduction of this question on the present occasion was, I feared, likely to outweigh the other matter under discussion. Lastly with regard to supporting Italian commercial initiative and helping her to secure special commercial advantages in Abyssinia, we had, as His Excellency was aware, a Treaty with Menelek, which guaranteed us in respect of customs duties and taxation every advantage conceded to the subjects of other nations.

I will return later on to the explanations given by Signor Agnesa on these particular points. Admiral Morin, on learning my views with regard to paragraph 2, seemed disposed to agree that it would perhaps for the present be best, if those views should at all represent the opinions held by Your Lordship, not to insist on the consideration of these particulars, but rather to confine discussion to the proposals contained in paragraphs 1 and 3, which he earnestly hopes Your Lordship may consider favourably. With regard to the first point he argues that it is impossible to foresee what may happen in Abyssinia on the death of Menelek, and that it is quite conceivable that his successor may affect to consider the engagements entered into by the present ruler as merely personal, and that outside influences may be brought to bear on the new sovereign to repudiate responsibility for them. He considers therefore that an engagement entered into between the British and Italian Governments to work together, on such lines as circumstances may show to be expedient for upholding the existing conventions and understandings, will greatly strengthen their position and help to discount any such intrigues. The agents on the spot would then require no further special instructions in this sense, but would have a definite line of action laid down for them to follow.

The question raised in paragraph 3 need, I think, present no great difficulties, and would, if favourably entertained, probably resolve itself not so much into an engagement to support a claim on behalf of Italy, as to refrain from claiming on our own account the area between the Dau and the Ganale, which Italy desires to see left open for her future expansion, an area moreover, which I understand the recent survey Commission are not inclined to recommend the inclusion of in British East Africa. A matter on which they may ask for our practical support is however the recognition of their occupation of Lugh.

It is evident to me both from the repeated advances which Italy has made in this matter and from the language used by the Minister and Signor Agnesa, that very great importance is attached by them to the proposal of a concrete agreement on these matters in general terms, both on account of the actual interests involved and because of the general prestige which would be added to the somewhat unsubstantial authority of Italy in those parts of Africa by the existence of a definite agreement with the preponderating Power. From the point of view, therefore, of the advantage of a very friendly understanding with Italy, these two points are, I think, worthy of favourable consideration.

To return to the questions raised in paragraph 2, I understand from Signor Agnesa that the prospects of railway communication from the sea to Sabderat are very remote. The scheme forms part of Italy's eventual programme in Eritrea. But the difficulties of obtaining financial support from the Chamber for Colonial development are very great. The total cost of connecting Massowah with Sabderat by railway would not be far short of two and a half million sterling, and though it is possible that the existing short line, of some 70 kilom., will be gradually extended by small "*étappes*," the realisation of the entire project could not be contemplated in less than twelve or perhaps fifteen years. It could however be of great assistance to the Government in promoting this enterprise to be able to announce that they had an understanding with His Majesty's Government, assuring them that in the event of a line being made from the Nile to Kassala, the Italian railway would, when it reached Sabderat be allowed to effect a junction with the Soudanese line. There was moreover the question to be considered of adopting identical gauges, with a view to making such a project ultimately

possible. He said he did not anticipate great commercial development for Eritrea. Its future, such as it was, must be agricultural: trade would follow the lines into which it was first directed and the line from Berber to Suakim would have determined those lines long before the scheme we were discussing entered into the phase of possible realisation. Nevertheless it was of course impossible to contemplate with equanimity the prospect that the main artery of their colony should be finally blocked at Sabderat, and that two important lines of communication should end within a stone's throw of one another, without the prospect of ultimate connection.

On the question of more favourable commercial treatment by the Soudan, he did not greatly enlighten me. But I gathered that there existed in his mind some suspicion that the trade of Gondar was being drawn away from the Nogara route towards Gallabat and Gedaref, and that the line of communication South of the Selit from which Signor Martini had anticipated considerable advantages, was proving a disappointment. I do not think however that very much importance need be attached to this point, or that there is any intention now to invite reconsideration of the commercial arrangement finally adopted in November 1901.

. The memoranda presented by the Italian Foreign Office on this and kindred subjects are apt to be obscured by vagueness of expression and a superabundance of generalising phrases. I therefore felt that it was necessary before transmitting these proposals to Your Lordship to obtain more definite information as to their specific meaning. I trust that the explanations now offered by the Minister and by Signor Agnesa will render it easier to form a judgment on their merits.

I have, &c.

RENNELL RODD.

Enclosure in No. 378.

Memorandum communicated by Admiral Morin.

(Translation.)

(Confidential.)

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs has taken note of the confidential memorandum handed by Sir F. Bertie to Admiral Morin, and dated the 20th June last, on the subject of the proposals made by Italy for a concrete understanding with the Government of His Britannic Majesty to safeguard their reciprocal interests, present and future, in Ethiopia on a basis to be determined, having due regard to the position of the two Powers in their possessions in East Africa.

With regard to the harmonious action of Colonel Harrington and Major Ciccodicola, recent telegrams and reports from the Royal Legation at Adis Abeba have given ample information, showing clearly that the question of the railway was, already at the commencement of June, settled at Adis Abeba in a sense entirely favourable to the British policy as regards the scheme of a railway from Berbera and the extinction of the French monopoly.

This information will undoubtedly have been communicated to the Foreign Office by Colonel Harrington, who will moreover have repeated how the Minister of the King in Adis Abeba has contributed in the most efficacious manner possible to the attainment of this object, which, according to Major Ciccodicola, has cost the British and Italian Legations three years of united effort. The King's Government indeed, as soon as the question of a railway from Zeyla or Berbera to Harrar was mooted, gave general instructions to Major Ciccodicola to conform his action to the effective support of the demands of the British representative, using to this end all the influence which he has been able to acquire with Menelek. The Government however inclined to the opinion that the question would have dragged on for a long period and that it would not have been possible to achieve any result without an openly avowed identity of attitude such as was adumbrated in the memorandum addressed to His Britannic Majesty's Embassy on the 23rd May, 1903.

The Government of the King feel a double satisfaction at the results obtained in view of the ample cooperation of the Italian representative, and they cherish the

confident hope that the British Government will assist them in arranging, as soon as Italy has provided for a line from Asmara to Sabderat, for a junction of this line with the Khartum-Kassala line.

The results recently obtained at Adis Abeba demonstrate how important it is that the representatives of the two Powers should continue to act together in order to safeguard in the most practicable manner their respective interests, and to neutralise hostile influences in the present as in the future.

And since it would be to their mutual advantage that their respective possessions should continue to advance progressively in commercial development, the Italian Government are of opinion that, eliminating every possible minor ground of controversy, an understanding with this object of a more general character might be arrived at. This the King's Government believe could be realised without any obligation to enter upon a definite colonial programme, but, simply by a practical definition of reciprocal interests in the sphere of activity assigned to each of the Powers within which that programme might have full development.

In view of these considerations the Italian Government do not think that the continuation of the campaign in Somaliland and the eventual dispositions which British policy may have to make in view of its results in those regions, can affect the understanding now proposed. Whereas, if such an understanding could once be concluded, the action of Italy in Somaliland would be more secure, and more advantageous to the common interests of Italy and Great Britain, not excluding the question of Italian co-operation for re-establishing tranquillity and peace in those regions.

The Italian Government therefore, while taking note of the declarations of the readiness of the British Government to discuss future agreements in a friendly spirit, feeling in any case that a duty is imposed on them to provide for their own present and future interests, find themselves compelled to press the view that such concrete understandings should not be further postponed, so that they may in perfect security and without misgiving devote themselves to the pacific development of their colonial action, since, if this cannot be realised, they will have to take their own measures independently to accomplish this object.

They therefore desire to know whether the Government of His Britannic Majesty are disposed to come to a concrete understanding, with such urgency as is possible, on the following points here enunciated in general terms, reserving ulterior considerations of detail.

1. A reciprocal guarantee in view of any possible changes in Ethiopia, having also in view a succession to the throne of that Empire: that is to say, that the two Governments should engage themselves reciprocally to act together for the maintenance of the agreements now existing between Ethiopia on the one side and Italy and England on the other, and pledge themselves likewise, in case the *status quo* in Ethiopia should be for any reason disturbed to come to an agreement on the course which the then existing circumstances may render advisable.

2. The connection of a railway from Khartum to Kassala with an Eritrean railway as indicated above. The establishment in the meantime between Eritrea and the Soudan of a commercial régime, on lines to be agreed upon hereafter, more favourable to Eritrea than has hitherto existed, and an undertaking to support the initiative which Italy will take, to render more facile the relations of the colony with the central markets of Ethiopia and to obtain some special commercial advantages for Italian industry in Ethiopia.

3. A regulation of the frontier in accordance with the line traced by the Protocol of March 24th, 1891, based on the considerations laid down in the memorandum of the 30th May last, and an agreement respecting the valley of the Juba based on negotiations already initiated at Zanzibar between the representatives of the two countries so as to make the river serviceable to the interests of both the colonies bordering thereon.

The Government on their side do not desire to confine the agreement to these points, if expediency should suggest others and it should be so agreeable to the British

Government and they will be happy to examine with the most friendly intentions any request which may be submitted to them, with the object of concluding such an understanding as has been sketched, for the safeguarding of their colonial interests, and at the same time of rendering even more intimate, in African questions as in others, the traditional friendship existing between Italy and England.

Rome, August 29, 1903.

V.—THE SUEZ CANAL.

No. 379.

Question asked in the House of Commons, June 28, 1898.

Extract from Parl. Deb., 4th ser., LX, p. 378.

Dr. Dalziel (Kirkcaldy Burghs) asked the First Lord of the Treasury whether the Government are in possession of information confirming the report that arrangements had been made by the Spanish Government to coal the Spanish squadron through the agents of an English firm at Port Said; and whether, in accordance with the neutrality proclamation, precautions are being taken that only sufficient coal to enable the fleet to steam to the nearest Spanish port will be supplied?

Mr. Balfour.—As regards the first paragraph of the honourable Gentleman's Question, no information to the effect he refers to has been received by the Government. As regards the second paragraph of the Question, every precaution to preserve neutrality will be observed by the Egyptian Government in Egyptian ports as would be observed by the British Government in British ports.

No. 380.

Memorandum by Mr. Oakes.

At the close of the sittings of the Commission appointed in 1885 to draw up an Act relative to the navigation of the Suez Canal, Sir Julian Pauncefote handed in the following general reservation in connection with the draft of a proposed Treaty for regulating the question :—

“ Les Délégués de la Grande-Bretagne, en présentant ce texte de Traité comme le régime définitif destiné à garantir le libre usage du Canal de Suez, pensent qu'il est de leur devoir de formuler une réserve générale quant à l'application de ces dispositions en tant qu'elles ne seraient pas compatibles avec l'état transitoire et exceptionnel où se trouve actuellement l'Égypte, et qu'elles pourraient entraver la liberté d'action de leur Gouvernement pendant la période de l'occupation de l'Égypte par les forces de Sa Majesté Britannique.”

When, as the result of subsequent negotiations with the French Government, Lord Salisbury, on the 21st October, 1887, forwarded to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris a draft Convention on this subject, for the consideration of that Government, and for submission to the other Powers, his Lordship instructed Mr. Egerton as follows :—

“ In laying this proposal before M. Flourens, it is my duty to renew the words of a reservation made, without opposition on any side, by Sir Julian Pauncefote at the close of the sittings of the Commissions of 1885. It was to the following effect :—

[Then follows the reservation as quoted above.]

“ I have in conclusion to request that you will give to M. Flourens a copy of this despatch, together with the draft Convention which it encloses.”

On the 4th November, 1887, copies of the draft Convention, as well as of the despatch to Mr. Egerton enclosing it, were sent to Her Majesty's Representatives at Berlin, Vienna, Madrid, Rome, The Hague, St. Petersburg, Constantinople, and Cairo, with instructions to communicate them to the Governments to which they were severally accredited. These Governments were therefore made acquainted with the reservation thus renewed.

On the 19th November, 1887, M. Waddington showed to Lord Salisbury a letter from M. Flourens, stating that the latter had been asked by the Dutch Government for an explanation of the reservation made. The answer M. Flourens stated himself to have made was to the effect that Great Britain during her occupation of Egypt, which was an exceptional and transitory state of things, would not be trammelled by the provisions of the Convention; and on the principle of the extension of equality to all Powers, the French Government understood a similar principle to extend to the other Signatories.

M. Waddington asked what was Lord Salisbury's opinion of this answer; and his Lordship replied that the last part of it was not intelligible to him; but that he had no ground for objecting to M. Flourens having made it to the Dutch Government (to Mr. Egerton, No. 666, the 19th November, 1887).

On the 22nd November, 1887, Her Majesty's Ambassador at Berlin stated that the French Ambassador had given him a copy of the Dutch question and of M. Flourens' reply, which latter was said to have been drawn up *in concert with Her Majesty's Government*; and that it was proposed to communicate them to the German Government.

Sir J. Pauncefoot thereupon wrote the following Minute:—

“There can be no application of our reservation to any other Power, as its *raison d'être* is our military occupation of Egypt. The French reply, as Lord Salisbury informed M. Waddington, is unintelligible; and M. Herbet, by handing these documents to Sir E. Malet, perhaps, is trying to fix us with tacit concurrence.”

Sir E. Malet was informed thereupon of the real state of the case, and a copy of the despatch No. 666 to Mr. Egerton was forwarded to him.

After the acceptance of the draft Convention, with certain amendments, by the Porte, it was forwarded to Her Majesty's Representatives at Rome, Berlin, St. Petersburg, Vienna, The Hague, and Madrid, with copy of an identic note to be presented by the Representatives of Great Britain, France and Turkey to the Governments of the other Powers represented on the International Commission of 1885, recommending the Convention thus amended for their acceptance (30th June, 1888).

It was accepted by all, and the Representatives at Constantinople were authorised to sign it. A ratification clause was afterwards added to it, and after some delay, caused by the desire of the Sultan to add an explanatory statement respecting His Majesty's possessions in the Red Sea, the Treaty was at length signed by the Representatives of the nine Powers at Constantinople on the 29th October, 1888 (Sir W. White, No. 78A, Telegraphic, 29th October, 1888).

The ratifications were exchanged at Constantinople on the 22nd December, 1888 (Sir W. White, Telegraphic, 22nd December, 1888).

So far as can be gathered from the papers, no further reference was made to the reservations of Her Majesty's Government or their consequences.

On the 28th January, 1889, a Decree was issued by the President of the French Republic for giving effect to the Treaty, in which it was declared that the ratifications having been deposited at Constantinople on the 28th December, 1888, “le dit Traité . . . recevra sa pleine et entière exécution” (Lord Lytton, No. 41, 30th January, 1889).

The Treaty was also published in the "Madrid Gazette" (Sir C. Ford, No. 16, Treaty, 24th February, 1889).

In June 1891 the Porte, on the proposal of France, supported by Great Britain, and with the concurrence of the other Powers, acceded to the desire of the Netherlands, that the notice provided for in Articles IX and X of the Treaty to be given to certain Powers should be given also to the Netherlands (Count Bylandt, 2nd June, 1891).

In June 1896, a Memorandum was prepared by the Librarian on the subject of the British reservations expressed in 1885. It has not been returned to the Department with the correspondence of that year, but the circumstances under which it was called for are perhaps to be found in the following despatch which was addressed by Lord Salisbury on the 15th July, 1896, to Her Majesty's Minister at Paris. The conversations therein, said to have taken place at St. Petersburg, do not appear to have been recorded in the official registers :—

"To-day, and at previous interviews I have had with the French Ambassador, the question of the Suez Canal has been adverted to in our conversation, and especially allusion has been made to the reserve made by Sir Julian Pauncefote in 1885, by which the right of landing troops at the Canal should remain to England as long as she was in occupation of Egypt. I said that Prince Lobanow had alluded in conversation with Sir N. O'Connor to the importance attached by Russia to the free navigation of the Suez Canal, and that he himself had, in general conversation, alluded to this reservation, which had consequently been made the subject of consideration. I said that after communication with Lord Cromer I thought there were some questions of detail which would have to be examined before effect could be given to any proposal for the withdrawal of the reserve. But I said that an undue importance had been attached to it by the European Powers, and that it was never originally intended by us, and certainly would not now be used, for the purpose of jeopardising the neutrality of the Canal; and for the sake of removing all misapprehension on that head, I should be glad if the reserve, which apparently was connected with the disturbances at the time of Arabi, and had lost its importance, could be modified or withdrawn. I repeated to him, as I had already repeated before, that Her Majesty's Government did not contemplate any circumstances under which they could possibly interfere with the neutrality of the Canal; and if any misapprehension existed upon this head by reason of the existence of this reserve, I should be very glad if we could find satisfactory means of putting an end to it. His Excellency told me that he thought his Government attached some importance to it, but that a good deal more importance was attached to it by the Russians. Their attention was suddenly concentrated on the Far East by the events which had taken place last year and the year before, and as it was their readiest means of communication with the Far East, and especially of reinforcing their naval forces in those waters, they were no doubt disturbed by any diplomatic provision which could interfere with the perfect neutrality of the Canal.

"I replied that the matter would require careful investigation, but that my present feeling was a desire to remove this cause of suspicion against England. We had not, and never have had, the slightest wish to interfere with the neutrality of the Canal, and we should be glad so to change any diplomatic document as to prevent that suspicion having even a plausible foundation."

I do not find that it has ever been distinctly stated whether the Suez Canal Treaty is or is not in operation.

A. H. OAKES.

Foreign Office, June 28, 1898.

APPENDIX.

*Memorandum by Mr. J. A. C. Tilley.**Memorandum respecting the Relations between Germany and Great Britain, 1892-1904.*

(8326.)

Foreign Office, January 5, 1905.

When Mr. Gladstone's Administration took office in 1892 the relations between Great Britain and Germany were for the moment good, the jealousies and misunderstandings attendant on the establishment of German Colonies in Africa having temporarily subsided; but the position of those Colonies was such that further friction was almost inevitable.⁽¹⁾

African Colonies.

They were then, as they are now, Togoland and Cameroons on the Gulf of Guinea, German South-West Africa and German East Africa; each of them with a British Colony on one or more frontiers. German South-West Africa has Walfisch Bay in the centre of its coast-line; and while the presence of the British Colony in their midst was from the first resented by the Germans, the surrounding of Walfisch Bay by a German Colony was equally resented at the Cape. The bitterness there felt towards South-West Africa expressed itself in sneers at the poverty and maladministration of the Colony, which provoked constant irritation at Berlin.

A further source of annoyance to the Germans had been the hoisting of the British flag on the coast of Santa Lucia Bay in 1884, just in time to prevent its annexation by Germany, and the subsequent exclusion of that Power, by the Agreement of 1885, from the hitherto vacant strip of territory between Natal and Delagoa Bay.

It is explanation enough of much misunderstanding to add that in no case were the boundaries between the British and German Colonies settled in 1892, and that the complicated negotiations which have been necessary, although now making satisfactory progress, have in many cases not yet been concluded.

Dr. Kayser.

But there was another difficulty attending negotiations on African questions during the first part of this period. This was the personality of Dr. Kayser, the Under-Secretary at the German Foreign Office, the key of whose policy was that there were but three Powers in Africa; England, France, and Germany, that two of these must inevitably combine against the third, and that Germany must keep a free hand for combination.

West Africa.

As regards her West African possessions, the main objects of Germany were to obtain a better seaboard, by acquiring the left bank of the River Volta, and to secure a good "Hinterland." In the rear of the Gold Coast and Togoland Colonies lay a neutral zone, in which Germany had, in 1888, promised to place no impediment in the way of trade.⁽²⁾ This promise was not fulfilled, and in addition to the trouble caused by friction between the British and German Colonies, there was a suspicion that Germany was intriguing with France to our prejudice.

In June 1893, in order to avoid French intrusion, Her Majesty's Government proposed to the German Government that Joint Commissioners should be sent to divide this neutral zone by means of Treaties with the native Chiefs. Germany eventually declined the proposal, saying that she had sufficient Treaties already, although as a matter of fact she had no proper Treaties. Accordingly, Mr. Fergusson was sent as English Commissioner to make for Her Majesty's Government the Treaties which would, in other circumstances, have been made by the Joint Commission. The German Government, who had assented to Mr. Fergusson's Mission, gave constant trouble by complaints of his proceedings, and persuaded Her Majesty's Government to amend the Treaties when made, on the ground that they were not explicit, and that they prejudiced German rights. In Dr. Kayser's words, "if he had got up and read them in the Reichstag Committee he would have been blown up with dynamite on the spot."⁽³⁾ In the meantime, the local Togoland authorities sent an agent to make Treaties on their own account, and this agent carried anti-British policy so far as to seize and carry away Mr. Fergusson's Treaty with the King of Salaga. The German Chargé d'Affaires at London brought this Treaty to the Foreign Office, and declared that it prejudiced German interests; this Treaty also was amended. The Germans also gave great trouble in connection with Treaties concluded by Mr. Fergusson outside the zone; in particular, they claimed a territory which they described as Tschantoland, but which apparently had no existence as a tribal unit, and no geographical limits; and they used this claim against France and Great Britain alternately. Eventually, in November 1894 Her

⁽¹⁾ African Department Notes, August 1, 1892.

⁽²⁾ Memorandum by Sir P. Anderson, August 1895, Confidential, No. 6659.

⁽³⁾ Sir E. Malet, No. 150, Africa, December 2, 1894.

Majesty's Government made an "unconditional surrender" on this point also, by withdrawing the Fergusson Treaties with tribes east of the neutral zone.

It was not therefore any uncompromising attitude on the part of Her Majesty's Government which gave rise to ill-feeling between the two countries in regard to West Africa.

Meanwhile, in March of this year (1894), Germany had made an agreement with France which resulted in giving that Power access to a branch of the Benué communicating with the main stream of the Lower Niger, and thus enabling her to claim the position of a riverain Power.⁽⁴⁾ That position had hitherto belonged to England alone, and Her Majesty's Government had been anxious to avoid the difficulties which, it was foreseen, would follow on the advent of the French. Dr. Kayser told Mr. Gosselin that this was Germany's answer to the numberless rebuffs she had received from England for many years back in all matters relating to colonial expansion.

In East Africa affairs were no less unsatisfactory than in West Africa.

Zanzibar.

In Zanzibar, the extra-territorial rights conferred on Germany by her Treaty with the Sultan of 1885 became a source of constant dispute.⁽⁵⁾ The exemption from search claimed by German vessels made it impossible for Her Majesty's Government to perform the duties which, in their opinion, devolved on them as the Protecting Power under the Brussels Act, but Germany maintained her claims none the less.

Witu.

In Witu, which we had taken over from Germany in 1890, German interference was based on alleged objections to its administration through the Sultan of Zanzibar instead of as a separate Sultanate, and the German Government endeavoured to obtain the settlement of certain "preposterous" claims by German subjects in exchange for the abandonment of their interference.⁽⁶⁾ The difficulty was evaded by Her Majesty's Government taking over the administration themselves.

Delagoa.

The German Government also showed great jealousy and suspicion of Great Britain in connection with the Portuguese Colonies in Africa, on which they suspected us of having designs, and Count Hatzfeldt took occasion to inform Lord Kimberley that if those Colonies were broken up, Germany could not permit them to become British territory.⁽⁷⁾ Inspired by these feelings, the German Government were endeavouring to support the Transvaal Government in their efforts to obtain possession of the Delagoa Bay Railway, then being built partly with German capital.

The concession for this railway had originally been held by a United States' citizen and then by an Anglo-American Company, but had been withdrawn by the Portuguese Government, who took over the railway themselves, and concluded an arrangement with the Transvaal for the extension of the line to Pretoria and Johannesburg. These proceedings led to complaints by the British and American Governments which were referred to the arbitration of Switzerland.

Mr. Rhodes had learned in March of 1893⁽⁸⁾ that the Transvaal Government, backed by Germany, were "in the field" as purchasers of the "Delagoa Bay" Railway from the Portuguese Government and Her Majesty's Minister at Lisbon had been at once instructed to contest the right of Portugal to alienate the railway without the consent of Her Majesty's Government, pending the result of the arbitration. The Portuguese Government refused to sell, but the German and Transvaal Governments continued their efforts for some time, and in October 1894 the German Minister at Lisbon communicated to the Portuguese Government a confidential memorandum⁽⁹⁾ on the Delagoa Bay Railway question, emphasising the concern which Germany claimed to feel in it, and expressing the urgent desire that, immediately upon the declaration of its Award by the Berne Tribunal, the German Government should be the first to be taken into the confidence of the Portuguese Cabinet, with a view to the adoption of a combined line of action. No reply was given to the communication.

In September 1894 a native insurrection, ascribed at Berlin and Lisbon to the intrigues of Mr. Rhodes, broke out at Lourenço Marques, and Her Majesty's Consul, without consulting the Portuguese authorities, made arrangements for twenty blue-jackets to land for the protection of the Consulate. The Portuguese protested, and Her Majesty's Government warned the Consul that his action was incorrect.⁽¹⁰⁾ Her Majesty's Government, in turn, prevented, by their protest, the enrolment of volunteers from the Transvaal.⁽¹¹⁾ The action of Her Majesty's Consul

(4) African Department Memorandum.

(5) African Department Memorandum, June 29, 1895.

(6) African Department Memorandum, June 29, 1895.

(7) To Mr. Gosselin, No. 174 A, Africa, October 31, 1894.

(8) Colonial Office, March 11, 1893.

(9) Sir H. MacDonell, No. 81 A, Africa, October 27, 1894.

(10) To Consul Bernal, Telegraphic, September 29, 1894.

(11) To Sir H. MacDonell, Nos. 24 and 25, Africa, Telegraphic, October 16, 1894.

was noted by the German Government as further evidence of the designs of Her Majesty's Government on Portuguese territory.

Meanwhile, they had themselves sent two men-of-war to Delagoa Bay to safeguard, as Baron von Marschall stated, "the large German interests involved, both on the coast and in the Transvaal."⁽¹²⁾

Samoa.

Away from Africa the object of Germany's keenest desires was Samoa. In 1887 a Conference had been held at Washington, in which Great Britain, Germany and the United States of America had taken part, and Her Majesty's Government had then been in favour of allowing the Power which had preponderating interests (Germany) to administer the island alone. But the United States' Government declined to assent to the proposal, and in subsequent years Her Majesty's Government became impressed with the repugnance felt towards such a solution in Australia and New Zealand.

Germany accepted the decision of the Conference, but German intrigues in Samoa did not cease.⁽¹³⁾ In June 1894 Her Majesty's Consul reported that the Germans were endeavouring to get the natives to ask for German protection, and were, it was believed, supplying the rebels of the period with ammunition. The Municipal President, M. Schmidt, consulted the German Consul alone on all matters. Dr. Kayser, in attempting to prove the superiority of German commercial interests, told Mr. Gosselin that there were forty German plantations in the Samoan group, and Count Hatzfeldt declared to Lord Kimberley that there were no British plantations; the truth seemed to be that there were four German and three British plantations.⁽¹⁴⁾

Egypt.

In Egypt, Germany generally supported the policy of Her Majesty's Government.⁽¹⁵⁾ On the death of the Khedive Tewfik, at the beginning of 1892, when the Porte was inclined to make difficulties in connection with the new Firman, the German Ambassador gave advice in the sense desired by Her Majesty's Government.⁽¹⁶⁾ Again, towards the end of the year, when the Egyptian Government wished to devote some portion of the economies arising from the conversion of the Debt to an increase of the army,⁽¹⁷⁾ the proposal received the support of Germany, at which His Majesty's Government expressed great satisfaction. On the other hand, in February, Germany had shown some anxiety for a settlement of the Egyptian question between Great Britain and Turkey, and had advised the Porte to send Shakir Pasha to London to discuss the matter, a suggestion which was unwelcome to Her Majesty's Government, and was discouraged by them.⁽¹⁸⁾ In April 1894 the German Commissioner was "most helpful" to Lord Cromer in settling a dispute between the Egyptian Government and the Caisse,⁽¹⁹⁾ in which the Italian Commissioner had associated himself with his French colleague in opposition to the English, Austrian, and German Commissioners, and Mr. Gosselin was instructed to express to the German Government the thanks of Her Majesty's Government for the German Commissioner's (Baron Riechthofen's) friendly conduct. On the other hand, in June the German Agent used his influence to persuade the Khedive to refuse an invitation to visit England, and counselled His Highness to offend England rather than Turkey.⁽²⁰⁾

Lord Rosebery.

At the Mansion House banquet this year (1894) Lord Rosebery made a speech in which he alluded to the isolation of Germany, and this was emphasised soon afterwards by an article in the "Standard." Both excited much hostile comment in Germany, and it is remarkable that throughout the last twelve years strong irritation has frequently been excited by individual utterances on one side or the other. It seems even to have crossed Lord Rosebery's mind that the feeling of hostility towards England which was prevalent in Germany might be personal to himself.⁽²¹⁾

In spite of all these differences, the German Government, towards the end of 1894, apparently alarmed by the idea that Great Britain was drawing closer to Russia, made some suggestions for an improvement in the relations of the two Powers, and Count Hatzfeldt had conversations on the subject with Lord Rosebery and Lord Kimberley, in which he pointed out that an alliance with Germany would be of much greater use to Her Majesty's Government than an alliance

(12) Mr. Gosselin's No. 139, Africa, October 29, 1894.

(13) Consul Cusack-Smith, No. 22, June 19, 1894.

(14) Consul Cusack-Smith, No. 29, July 17.

(15) To Mr. Gosselin, No. 137, May 9.

(16) Mr. Fane, No. 13, January 11, 1892.

(17) To Sir E. Malet, No. 310, December 28, 1892.

(18) Sir C. Ford, No. 51, Secret, February 19, 1892.

(19) Lord Cromer, No. 63, April 19.

(20) Sir P. Currie, No. 92, Telegraphic, June 28, 1894.

(21) Sir E. Malet, No. 13, Secret, January 16, 1895.

with Russia.⁽²²⁾ His Excellency added, however, that he was bound to say that, after eight years' strenuous efforts to induce the Government of Great Britain to come to a close understanding with the Triple Alliance, he found that his efforts in that direction were fruitless and that Germany must not look for any effective co-operation from us.

Lord Kimberley replied that this country was never willing to enter into such engagements, but that Her Majesty's Government always desired to maintain the most cordial relations with Germany, and had observed with great regret the signs of irritation in that country against us in regard to colonial questions. Count Hatzfeldt then said that we, on our part, had shown a want of good will towards the German Government in these matters, and, "in short, always grudged everything to Germany and treated her as if she were of no account." He instanced our refusal to let Germany have Samoa.

A few days later Mr. Gosselin, writing from Berlin, quoted the "*Kölnische Zeitung*" as saying that from the very first "England had employed the most contemptible means of check-mating German progress;"⁽²³⁾ they would mention only Walfisch Bay, St. Lucia Bay, Cameroons, Togo, the 10-mile coast-line in East Africa, New Guinea, Samoa, the landing of British troops at the request of the British Consul at Delagoa Bay, the action of Mr. Cecil Rhodes, to say nothing of the Congo State question.

In answering this despatch Lord Kimberley expressed his concern that, not only the German press, but the German Minister for Foreign Affairs appeared to conceive that Germany had reasons for resentment against England.⁽²⁴⁾ Her Majesty's Government were ignorant of the causes of this ill-feeling, but they were quite willing to enter on a frank exchange of views.

Sir E. Malet read this answer to Baron von Marschall, who seemed anxious to drop "the tone of acrimony which prevailed a month ago."

The Austrian Minister for Foreign Affairs and the Italian Ambassador at Vienna both took occasion to comment on the ill-feeling between Germany and England, which they deplored. Count Kalnoky attributed it to the confusion which reigned in the German Foreign Office, and Count Nigra to inspiration from high quarters.

In a conversation with Mr. Gosselin in December of the same year, Dr. Kayser specified, as the causes of German ill-will, the Togo Hinterland, Samoa, and Delagoa Bay, and he said that every German, from the Emperor down, felt aggrieved at our antagonistic policy.⁽²⁵⁾ This, it may be observed, was the first reference to any special German claims in Delagoa Bay that had been made to Her Majesty's Representative.

Delagoa. Samoa.

A few days later Baron von Marschall had a conversation on the same lines with Sir E. Malet. In regard to Delagoa Bay he said that the German Government only desired the maintenance of the *status quo*. They objected to encroachments by Mr. Cecil Rhodes on the sovereignty of Portugal and the commercial independence of the port or of the railway.⁽²⁶⁾ In regard to Samoa, he said that Germany had always hoped that Her Majesty's Government would have regarded the matter in the same light as Lord Salisbury did in 1887, when the opposition of the United States was the only bar to the islands being placed under a German Administration as long as German interests there preponderated. The opposition of the United States of America was withdrawn, and he could not see why it was impossible to follow the course which, in the opinion of Her Majesty's Government, in 1887 offered the best chance of a satisfactory solution of the question.

Dr. Kayser.

In a conversation with the German Emperor which took place at the beginning of the following year, Sir E. Malet, when asked what had brought about the existing state of unfriendliness, said: "If you will allow me to sum up the answer in a word, I should say Dr. Kayser."⁽²⁷⁾

Prince Bismarck.

A good instance of German policy, or, at any rate, of what was suspected to be German policy, occurred at the very beginning of the year 1895. In a conversation with Herr Schwabach, the British Consul-General, Prince Bismarck let fall certain observations as to an understanding between Italy and Russia, which had been the subject of comment in the "*Hamburger Nachrichten*."⁽²⁸⁾ Prince Bismarck said that the understanding probably related to the safety of Italy in case of a Russian descent upon Constantinople, and perhaps to a share of the spoil in Albania.

⁽²²⁾ To Mr. Gosselin, No. 316, Secret, November 19.

⁽²³⁾ No. 244, Confidential, November 25.

⁽²⁴⁾ To Sir E. Malet, No. 321 A, November 29.

⁽²⁵⁾ Sir E. Malet, No. 150, Africa, December 2, 1894.

⁽²⁶⁾ No. 256, December 8.

⁽²⁷⁾ No. 13, January 16, 1895.

⁽²⁸⁾ Sir E. Malet, No. 8, Confidential, January 10.

Sir E. Malet suspected that the rumour was only invented in order to sow distrust between Great Britain and Italy. The allegation was, in any case, categorically denied by the Italian Minister for Foreign Affairs.

Transvaal.

During the year 1895 a series of incidents occurred showing the anxiety of the Germans to display sympathy with the Transvaal and to increase their political and commercial influence there and at Lourenço Marques.⁽²⁹⁾

The policy of Germany in regard to the Transvaal was made the subject of representations to Baron von Marschall by Sir E. Malet at the beginning of 1895, when the latter accused the German Government of "coquetry" with the Transvaal.⁽³⁰⁾ Baron von Marschall attributed the ill-feeling on this matter to the anti-German attitude of Mr. Rhodes. In any case, Germany made a great show of friendship for the Transvaal Government, and a banquet was held at Pretoria on the Emperor's birthday, in the course of which President Kruger declared that the time had come for the establishment of the closest friendly relations between the Transvaal and Germany. A deputation of German naval officers from the "Condor" visited Pretoria on the occasion of the opening of the Delagoa Bay Railway, and the Emperor sent a telegram to Mr. Kruger, in which he alluded to the railway as "a means of drawing closer the bonds which connect the two countries." About the same time Mr. Rhodes aroused great anger at Berlin by some very offensive remarks about the German colonies, especially South-West Africa, which he made to a correspondent of the "Kreuz Zeitung."⁽³¹⁾ Sir E. Malet himself characterised the remarks as intolerably galling.⁽³²⁾ Mr. Rhodes took the opportunity to declare that the Cape would never give up Walfisch Bay, and also to reproach Germany with having refused him permission to lay a telegraph line through German East Africa.

Otherwise the relations between Germany and Great Britain as regards South-West Africa were more neighbourly, and an amicable fusion was carried out of the interests of two important groups of British and German capitalists.⁽³³⁾

East African Mails.

In April the German Government made an Agreement with Portugal by which the control of the mail-packet service on the south-east coast of Africa passed from British to German hands.⁽³⁴⁾

Amatongaland.

In October, Baron von Marschall, in acknowledging our notification of the annexation of Amatongaland, merely observed that the Government of the South African Republic had protested against the annexation of the Amatongaland territories belonging to the Chiefs Zambaan and Umbosega.⁽³⁵⁾ In this attitude he was backed by the German Colonial Society, who, at a meeting held in June, had passed a Resolution in favour of "all measures calculated to promote friendly relations with the Transvaal people, and to strengthen their independence."

Transvaal.

Mr. Gosselin, in commenting on this and other instances of the policy governing German relations with the Transvaal, remarked that "it seemed to be inspired from the highest source;"⁽³⁶⁾ but he also connected it with the Chancellorship of Prince Hohenlohe, who was in favour of a forward policy in all colonial matters.

On the 23rd November, 1895, Sir J. de Wet reported to Sir H. Robinson that German intrigues were rife, and he believed that Germany was "aiding and abetting the Transvaal in an endeavour to get possession of the Delagoa Bay Railway"; Germans were also buying up all the land they could get at Delagoa Bay with the object of strengthening their claims or pretensions."⁽³⁷⁾

On the last day of the year Baron von Marschall, who was alarmed at the prospect of an Uitlander rising in the Transvaal, told Sir F. Lascelles that Germany could not consent to the Transvaal being made a dependency of the Cape Colony.⁽³⁸⁾ German public opinion was greatly excited, and the Imperial Government could not accept as a solution anything which would

⁽²⁹⁾ Mr. Gosselin, No. 139, Africa, October 29, 1895.

⁽³⁰⁾ Sir E. Malet, No. 6 A, Very Confidential, January 26.

⁽³¹⁾ Sir E. Malet, No. 10, Africa, February 1, 1895.

⁽³²⁾ Sir E. Malet, No. 18, Africa, February 12.

⁽³³⁾ Confidential, No. 6637.

⁽³⁴⁾ Mr. Gosselin, No. 139, Africa, October 29, 1895.

⁽³⁵⁾ Mr. Gosselin, No. 138, Africa, October 29, 1895.

⁽³⁶⁾ Mr. Gosselin, No. 139, Africa.

⁽³⁷⁾ Colonial Office, Confidential, December 27, 1895.

⁽³⁸⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 6, Africa, Telegraphic, December 31.

endanger the independence of the South African Republic.⁽³⁹⁾ At the same time, the German Government were prepared to advise the Transvaal authorities to make concessions. In the course of this conversation, Baron von Marschall also referred to the divergent policy of the two countries in other parts of the world, and he went on to say that, though "he did not wish to indulge in threats," Her Majesty's Government must be aware that there were many unsettled questions, and that the idea of dealing with them without regard to English interests would be favourably received in certain quarters. He said that public opinion in Germany was asking what advantage Germany derived from her efforts to maintain her friendship for England, and if he was to calm people's minds he must be able to point to some friendly action on the part of Her Majesty's Government.

Two days later, when Baron von Marschall had received the news of the Jameson raid, his Excellency, in the course of his protest, declared that Germany could not admit that England had greater rights over the Transvaal than any other Power, except in so far as the IVth Article of the Convention of 1884 provides that any Treaties which the South African Republic might make with other Powers would be submitted to Her Majesty's Government.⁽⁴⁰⁾ This theory was, of course, challenged by Her Majesty's Government.⁽⁴¹⁾

On the 3rd January appeared the German Emperor's telegram of congratulation to President Kruger on the defeat of the raid, a telegram which, according to the King of Saxony, originated with Prince Hohenlohe. Although it was to some extent explained away by Count Hatzfeldt and Baron von Marschall, the excitement caused in England was so intense as to take almost every European Government by surprise; "in high quarters" in Vienna "the recent utterances from Berlin were considered reckless and unjustifiable."⁽⁴²⁾

The reports received by Her Majesty's Minister at Lisbon at this time, and during the two previous years, showed that the German Government had been working hand in hand with, and had given the whole weight of its support to, the Agents of those Governments, whose special aim had been to sow distrust between Great Britain and Portugal, to hamper our action in South Africa, and to gain a footing on the Delagoa Bay territory.⁽⁴³⁾ These intrigues continued through the next three years.

West Africa.

To revert to West Africa, Germany had, in March 1895, made fresh proposals for a settlement, her main object being to acquire a station on the left bank of the Volta, while an apparently subsidiary motive was to oust Great Britain from the undivided control over the Lower Niger which had been recognised by the Agreement of 1885. In spite of a self-denying offer made by Great Britain the negotiations fell through; the Colonial Office refused to give up the district east of the Volta, in return for the concession, offered by Germany, of her claims to Nikki and to a position on the navigable part of the Niger (to neither of which was she in any way entitled), or for the surrender of a Treaty made in defiance of Agreements by the Togoland Agent mentioned earlier in this Memorandum. Dr. Kayser, in annoyance at his failure, threatened that, unless a settlement was arrived at, Germany would come to an arrangement with France without considering us.

During 1896 the irritation between the two countries was kept up by events in Zanzibar.

Zanzibar.

In August the Sultan of Zanzibar died, and one Seyyid Khaled seized the Palace and endeavoured to make himself Sultan. The British fleet bombarded the Palace and Khaled took refuge in the German Consulate; the British authorities pressed for his surrender, but both the German Consul and the Imperial Government, when approached by Sir F. Lascelles, refused to give him up, claiming that the case was covered by German extra-territorial rights. After some days Khaled embarked at the Consulate on a German man-of-war's boat, and was taken on board the man-of-war to Dar-es-Salaam. Her Majesty's Government protested against this action, and refused to admit that Germany was within her rights.⁽⁴⁴⁾ Eventually Lord Salisbury offered to submit the dispute to the decision of a neutral jurist, but the offer was declined and the matter dropped.

On the mainland, at Mombasa, German intrigues to undermine British influence were also going on.⁽⁴⁵⁾ German Consular officers were said to be working with German traders to this end. One of the most prominent agitators was Mr. Denhardt, whose "preposterous" claim against Her Majesty's Government, arising out of the occupation of Witu, was still a subject of discussion.

⁽³⁹⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 174, Africa, Confidential, December 31, 1895.

⁽⁴⁰⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 1, Africa, January 2, 1896.

⁽⁴¹⁾ To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 5, Africa, January 7.

⁽⁴²⁾ Sir E. Monson, No. 6, Secret, January 8, 1896.

⁽⁴³⁾ Sir H. MacDonell, No. 6, Africa, Secret, January 14.

⁽⁴⁴⁾ To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 191 A, Africa, December 7, 1896.

⁽⁴⁵⁾ Mr. Craufurd, October 10, 1896.

Lord Rosebery.

In October of this year Baron von Marschall, in conversation with Sir F. Lascelles, alluded to the hostility towards Germany which seemed to exist generally in England, and was manifested even in the speeches of English statesmen.⁽⁴⁶⁾ He referred particularly to a speech by Lord Rosebery at Edinburgh, which contained some severe remarks against Germany, and he went on to say that it was the earnest wish of the German Government to maintain good relations between the two countries.

Egypt.

In Egypt, Germany was still in the main friendly. She supported Her Majesty's Government in the matter of the advance by the Caisse of £500,000 for the Nile Expedition, and the German Government hoped that this action on their part "would lead to a complete re-establishment of friendly relations."⁽⁴⁷⁾

Again in May the German Emperor warned Her Majesty's Government that the Russian Government were contemplating a proposal for a European Conference on the Egyptian question.⁽⁴⁸⁾ His Imperial Majesty wished Her Majesty's Government to be enabled to take the sense of the other Powers on this proposal in good time, and expressed himself as opposed to such a Conference. He took the opportunity of pointing out the mistake which Her Majesty's Government were falling into by coming to an agreement with France on the subject. It did not in fact appear that Russia contemplated a proposal of the nature indicated, and Her Majesty's Government were not at the time making any agreement with France, but the Emperor's advice was no doubt well intended.

Even later, when the Anglophobe party in Egypt were encouraged by the bad relations between Germany and England in South Africa to endeavour to enlist German aid, the German Agent (Count Metternich) declined to lend himself to their schemes.⁽⁴⁹⁾

At the same time, one theory of the German policy in regard to Egypt was summed up by the French Ambassador at Berlin, who, in a conversation with Sir F. Lascelles, said that Germany would be bitterly annoyed if England and France came to an agreement respecting Egypt, as she would lose her one instrument for putting pressure on England.⁽⁵⁰⁾

China.

Meanwhile, the war between China and Japan had brought about a situation in which new relations sprang up between the Powers in the Far East. The Treaty of Shimonoseki, signed on the 17th April, 1895, provided among other things for the cession to Japan of Newchwang, the Liaotung Peninsula, and Port Arthur. Her Majesty's Government raised no objection to these provisions, but Russia did object to the acquisition by Japan of territory on the mainland; in upholding this objection, she was supported both by France and Germany. Her Majesty's Government refused to join the three Powers, but they advised Japan to yield.

Soon afterwards, however, Germany joined with Great Britain in warning the Tsung-li Yamên of the risk involved in accepting a loan guaranteed by Russia, and in pressing them to accept a loan from an Anglo-German Syndicate. The Russian loan was accepted on the 5th July, 1895, but without giving Russia any power to interfere with the Chinese Maritime Customs, as was feared might be the case. Very soon afterwards negotiations with the Anglo-German Syndicate were begun. An agreement for a loan of £16,000,000 was signed on the 23rd March, 1896, after strenuous opposition from the French Minister. It should be added that, before joining in these negotiations, the German Government had favoured the idea of an exclusively German loan of £8,000,000, to take priority over an English loan of like amount, but the Berlin bankers would not consider the proposal.

While these arrangements were in progress the German Minister was reported to be endeavouring to obtain from the Chinese Government a coaling-station in the Chusan Archipelago.⁽⁵¹⁾ Mr. Beauclerk was instructed to remind the Chinese Government of its obligations to us under the Treaty of 1846 (respecting the evacuation of Chusan by the British forces), and received a written assurance that they would grant no such concession.

Financial Aid to Portugal.

In 1897, Lord Salisbury took into consideration a scheme for assisting Portugal in her financial difficulties, and at the same time guarding ourselves against the alienation of the Portuguese Colonies on the south-east coast of Africa to the Transvaal or any other foreign Power. The subject was first discussed between Mr. Chamberlain and M. de Soveral on the 16th May, 1897.

⁽⁴⁶⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 193, Africa, Confidential, October 5.

⁽⁴⁷⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 88, Africa, March 20, 1896.

⁽⁴⁸⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 22, Most Secret, Telegraphic, May 5, 1896.

⁽⁴⁹⁾ Lord Cromer, May 28, 1897.

⁽⁵⁰⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 43, Confidential, February 26, 1896.

⁽⁵¹⁾ Mr. Beauclerk, November , 1895.

The negotiations fell through for the time, but German fears were aroused, and in November the German Emperor recalled Herr von Derenthall, his Minister at Lisbon, because he was not, in His Majesty's opinion, upholding German against British influence in Portugal with sufficient firmness.

Before leaving Lisbon Herr von Derenthall had a conversation with Sir Hugh MacDonell, in the course of which the latter observed that Her Majesty's Government could not admit that the commercial and financial rights of Germany, which had lately sprung up in the Transvaal, could give her any right to assume the domineering tone which had led to the Emperor's telegram to Mr. Kruger.⁽⁵²⁾

The question of financial assistance to Portugal was revived in 1898 and discussed with Messrs. Rothschild; on the 23rd May M. de Soveral asked for the assistance of Her Majesty's Government in obtaining a temporary advance of £200,000 from Messrs. Rothschild, to enable the Portuguese Government to fulfil certain obligations to the *Crédit Lyonnais*.⁽⁵³⁾

This particular scheme fell through, but the negotiations for a general arrangement were renewed, and in June Sir H. MacDonell reported that the German Minister at Lisbon was actively endeavouring to ascertain their object. In the same month Lord Salisbury, on being questioned by Count Hatzfeldt, stated that M. de Soveral had discussed the question of a loan with Mr. Chamberlain;⁽⁵⁴⁾ and a few days later the German Minister at Lisbon, by order of the German Emperor, demanded an immediate audience of the King of Portugal, in order to make an important communication on the subject of our negotiations. This communication, which was followed by a similar one from the French Minister, was to the effect that the Emperor would not continue on amicable terms with Portugal if these negotiations were carried on without due regard to the legitimate interests of Germany in her African Colonies.⁽⁵⁵⁾ After this, in conversation with M. de Soveral, Mr. Chamberlain suggested that Germany "might share in the loan, taking her security on some of their Western possessions."⁽⁵⁶⁾

On the 23rd June Count Hatzfeldt had an interview with Lord Salisbury, and made proposals for an eventual division of the Portuguese Colonies. At the same time his Excellency hinted that Germany was about to make demands on Liberia, and was told, in reply, that any diminution of the territory or independence of Liberia would be regarded by Her Majesty's Government with the greatest possible aversion. Count Hatzfeldt added that he expected a benevolent examination of his proposals, on the ground that in past negotiations Germany had been of great service to this country. When Lord Salisbury "pressed him to specify these incidents, which his Lordship's memory did not enable him to recall," Count Hatzfeldt said that Russia and France together were very much disposed to attack us on the subject of the Suez Canal, and had only been prevented by the disapproval of Germany.⁽⁵⁷⁾

The idea of an immediate loan to Portugal dropped after this, but the negotiations for an arrangement with Germany continued, and Count Hatzfeldt regarded them as "the inauguration of a common colonial policy by which they left the whole of South Africa to England." The "Germans said that their demands were the minimum for their abandonment of the Boers and the Transvaal; if they did not get what they wanted, they would turn to other Powers."⁽⁵⁸⁾ Count Hatzfeldt was moved to make these observations by a remark of Mr. Balfour to the effect that German communications to Her Majesty's Government were generally not of a very agreeable character.

On the 22nd August the German Emperor told Sir F. Lascelles that colonial expansion had become a necessity for Germany; if England would not help him, he must go to other Powers, as he had to Russia when England refused her consent to his obtaining a coaling station in China.

Eventually on the 30th August, 1898, Mr. Balfour and Count Hatzfeldt signed two Conventions. The first of these Conventions provided: that whenever either Government thought it expedient to accede to a request by Portugal for an advance on the security of the revenues of Angola, Mozambique, or Timor, they should inform the other Government, which should have the right of participation; that the revenues of Mozambique south to the Zambezi, and of that part of the province lying on the left bank of the Zambezi above its confluence with the Shiré, and those of the province of Angola, between latitude 8° and a point 5 miles north of Egito (*i.e.*, the central portion of the province), should be assigned to the English loan, and the remainder to the German loan; in case of default the customs-houses of the districts thus defined to be handed over to the two Powers respectively; neither Power to endeavour to obtain concessions except in its own sphere.

The second Convention, which was Secret, and, unless divulged by the Germans, has not been made known to the Portuguese Government, provided for the contingency of "its

(52) Sir H. MacDonell to Mr. Bertie, November 15, 1897.

(53) To Sir H. MacDonell, No. 11, Africa, *Telegraphic*, May 25.

(54) To Viscount Gough, No. 93, Africa, June 14. [*V. No. 66, p. 48, Ed.*]

(55) To Sir H. MacDonell, No. 72, Africa, June 22. [*V. No. 68, p. 50, Ed.*]

(56) Memorandum, June 22, 1898.

(57) To Lord Gough, No. 102, Africa, Secret, June 23. [*V. No. 70, p. 52, Ed.*]

(58) To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 139, Africa, August 19, 1898. [*V. No. 85, p. 67, Ed.*]

unfortunately not being found possible to maintain the integrity of the African possessions of Portugal south of the Equator, as well as of those in Timor."

The Powers agreed jointly to oppose intervention of any kind by a third Power in the Portuguese possessions; that neither would advance any claim to the possession of or exercise of political influence in the district of which the customs had been assigned to the other.

Egypt.

In spite of this African Agreement, Germany was found not long afterwards making overtures to France, after the Fashoda incident, for a joint understanding to counteract English colonial policy.⁽⁵⁹⁾

During the war in South Africa the attitude of the German Government was on the whole correct, but they adopted an unconciliatory line in regard to the seizure and search of vessels suspected of carrying contraband, and in one case, at least, that of the "General," worded their protest in so abrupt a manner as to call for remonstrance from Lord Salisbury.⁽⁶⁰⁾ No proof was obtainable that the ships in question were liable to seizure, and considerable sums were paid in compensation.

The anti-English attitude of the German press was violent throughout the war, although the Government, according to the German Foreign Office, did their best to modify its tone.⁽⁶¹⁾

A certain number of German officers also served in the Boer army, in spite of an Imperial order, issued on the 31st October, 1899, to the effect that all possible steps should be taken to prevent retired Prussian officers from doing so, and that those on the active list who were on leave should not be given permission to go to South Africa.

China.

Meanwhile, German pretensions had been actively pushed in China. In November 1897, on the pretext of requiring compensation for the murder of two German missionaries, a German force was sent to occupy Kiao-chau, and the Chinese Government were informed that the place would not be evacuated until the demands of the German Government were complied with. These demands included a preferential right to the building of railways in Shantung and the working of mines along the route of such railways. On learning of these conditions, Her Majesty's Government informed their Minister that they would oppose the grant of exclusive privileges of this nature to Germany.

Count von Bülow assured Sir F. Lascelles that, in acting as they had done, the German Government had had no intention of doing anything disagreeable to England, and had selected Kiao-chau precisely because it was far removed from the regions in which England was directly interested. He said that Her Majesty's Government need feel no apprehension from a commercial point of view on account of the German occupation of Kiao-chau, as he was convinced it would be open to the commerce of the world, and he declared that he was a strong partisan of a good understanding between Germany and England, and sincerely hoped that the existing irritation would gradually subside.

Lord Salisbury told the German Ambassador that the "mode in which the purpose of Germany had been attained impressed him more unfavourably than the purpose itself: the Russians had acted up to this point with perfect correctness, but he could not pay the same compliment to the Germans," who had given no indication of their intentions.⁽⁶²⁾

In February, Sir C. MacDonald reported that a Chinese scheme for constructing, with English and American capital, a railway from Tien-tsin through Shantung to Chinkiang had been strenuously opposed by the German Minister.⁽⁶³⁾ The German Minister immediately afterwards told Sir C. MacDonald that the intention of his Government was that Shantung should be, commercially, a German province.⁽⁶⁴⁾ Her Majesty's Government made a protest on the subject, and the German Government declared that they had merely asked for the first offer to be made to German firms if a railway in Shantung were to be constructed.⁽⁶⁵⁾ The German Minister at Peking stated that he had been told by his Government that "the first refusal clause" of their Agreement with China had been communicated to Her Majesty's Government, who had made no objection.

The Tien-tsin-Chinkiang Railway has since been made a joint Anglo-German enterprise.

On the 6th March, 1898, the Agreement between Germany and China was signed;⁽⁶⁶⁾ Germany obtained a lease of Kiao-chau for ninety-nine years and power to exercise sovereign rights within a 50-kilom. zone round the bay, besides railway and mining privileges, which were

⁽⁵⁹⁾ Sir E. Monson, No. 604, *Telegraphic*, November 13, 1898.

⁽⁶⁰⁾ To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 21, *Africa*, January 17, 1900.

⁽⁶¹⁾ Mr. Buchanan, No. 127, *Africa*, November 20, 1901. [*V. No. 325, p. 262, Ed.*]

⁽⁶²⁾ To Sir F. Lascelles, January 12, 1898. [*V. No. 3, p. 4, Ed.*]

⁽⁶³⁾ Sir C. MacDonald, No. 44, *Telegraphic*, February 18.

⁽⁶⁴⁾ No. 48, *Telegraphic*, February 19.

⁽⁶⁵⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 7, *Telegraphic*, February 24.

⁽⁶⁶⁾ Sir C. MacDonald, No. 65, *Telegraphic*, March 9.

only to be made known to those interested in the development of the Protectorate. The Tsung-li Yamèn declared to Sir C. MacDonald that the German Minister had told them that the railway clauses had been communicated to Her Majesty's Government, who had made no objection, and that the Chinese Government had thus been induced to sign, in spite of Sir C. MacDonald's protest. They were told that the statement attributed to the German Minister was absolutely unfounded.

Later on, after the acquisition of Port Arthur by Russia, Her Majesty's Government, with the concurrence of Japan, obtained a lease of Wei-hai Wei, in the Shantung Province, as compensation for the advantages given to Russia* and Germany.⁽⁶⁷⁾ In order to obviate the resentment which Sir F. Lascelles anticipated on the part of the German Government, Her Majesty's Government made a formal declaration, some months before the signature of the Convention, to the effect that they had no intention of injuring or contesting the rights and interests of Germany in Shantung, and they promised not to construct any railway communication from Wei-hai Wei into the interior of the province. At the same time, the German Ambassador was told that Her Majesty's Government did not recognise the preferential right to construct railways in Shantung claimed by Germany.

Samoa.

In 1898 disturbances broke out in Samoa, on the death of Malietoa Laupepa, who had been King of Samoa since 1889; the two principal candidates for the succession were Malietoa Tanu and Mataafa.⁽⁶⁸⁾ In accordance with the General Act of Berlin, concluded in 1889, between Great Britain, Germany, and the United States, the question of electing a new King was referred to the Chief Justice, who decided in favour of Malietoa. The adherents of Mataafa, openly supported, according to our reports, by the Germans, refused to accept the decision, and a serious conflict took place, in which Malietoa was defeated; he, together with his principal supporters and Mr. Chambers, the Chief Justice, took refuge on board Her Majesty's ship "Porpoise." During the period of anarchy which followed, Mataafa was supported by the German Consul, while the United States and British Consuls upheld the Chief Justice's decision—a state of things which led to extreme tension between the three Representatives. Eventually the three Powers sent special Commissioners to report on the situation. In the first place they upheld the Chief Justice's decision, but they coupled with this action the abolition of the kingdom; and eventually they declared that the only system likely to be successful was government by one Power.

In the end an Agreement was signed between Great Britain and Germany on the 14th November, 1899, and this was followed by a tripartite Convention, in which the United States took part. Samoa (or, to speak more strictly, the two principal islands of the Samoan group) was handed over to Germany, who, in return, withdrew all claims to Tonga and Savage Island, and ceded to Great Britain certain of the German Solomon Islands.

China.

In 1900, China was thrown into confusion by the Boxer rebellion, which led to the intervention of the Powers, who sent forces, in the first place, to relieve the besieged European Legations at Peking. Disturbances were also feared at Shanghai, and after some animated discussion with the French Government, 3,000 British troops were landed; the Japanese, French and German Governments also landed detachments, the latter in friendly communication with Her Majesty's Government. The German Emperor took this opportunity of making overtures for co-operation in maintaining the principle of the "open door,"⁽⁶⁹⁾ and an Agreement was signed on the 16th October. The two Governments declared that it was a matter of permanent international interest that the ports on the rivers and littoral of China should remain free and open to trade for nationals of all countries without distinction; and that they would uphold the same "for all Chinese territory, as far as they could exercise influence;" that they would not, on their part, make use of the present complications to obtain for themselves any territorial advantages in Chinese dominions, and would "direct their policy towards maintaining undiminished the territorial condition of the Chinese Empire;" that if another Power made use of the complications in China to obtain under any form whatever such territorial advantages, they would come to a preliminary understanding as to the steps to be taken to protect their own interests in China. The Agreement was communicated to Austria-Hungary, France, Italy, Japan, Russia and the United States, and these Powers were invited to accept the principles recorded in it. Austria, Italy, and Japan did accept them in full, the other Powers in part; but the Agreement excited much irritation at St. Petersburg. Later on, the German Chargé d'Affaires at St. Petersburg, in order to remove this irritation, gave assurances that no hostility to Russia was implied, and that Germany had been driven to come to terms with England by Russia having declined, at the

*The acquisition by Russia of a lease of the Liaotung Peninsula will be mentioned in a separate Memorandum on our relations with Russia.

(67) To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 52, Telegraphic, April 10, 1899.

(68) Western Department Memorandum, 1900.

(69) Sir F. Lascelles, Telegraphic, August 22, 1900. [*Cf.* Vol. II, No. 8, p. 7, *Ed.*]

commencement of the complications, to entertain proposals made by Germany for assuring her position on the Yang-tsze.⁽⁷⁰⁾

In the meanwhile, there had been some ill-feeling with regard to the command of the international troops which was in the hands of Count von Waldersee. Sir E. Satow reported that the Commander-in-chief was surrounded by an exclusively German staff and communicated as a rule with the German Minister alone of the foreign Representatives, with the result that English prestige suffered unduly.⁽⁷¹⁾

However, in February 1901 Count von Bülow was glad to think that there was no question of importance upon which any serious difference of opinion "was likely to arise between the two Governments."⁽⁷²⁾

A difference of opinion did, nevertheless, arise very shortly in regard to the interpretation of the Anglo-German Agreement. Russia was at this moment forcing on China an Agreement respecting Manchuria, which was calculated to deprive China of her sovereignty over that region, and the prospect was so alarming to Japan that it was understood that she would go to war if assured that Great Britain and Germany would not allow France to help Russia.⁽⁷³⁾ In these circumstances, we endeavoured to ascertain what attitude Germany was prepared to adopt.

The German Government replied, after some delay, that, in the event of war between Japan and Russia, Germany would maintain a benevolent neutrality; by this she meant the "strictest and most correct neutrality," more strict than that shown by her during the war in South Africa, when a certain quantity of arms were provided to Her Majesty's Government by German subjects.⁽⁷⁴⁾

The case seemed at first to fall within the scope of the Anglo-German Agreement, and the question was raised both in the Reichstag and in Parliament.

On the 15th March Count von Bülow made a speech in the Reichstag, in which he stated that the Anglo-German Agreement had no reference to Manchuria, and that this was made clear by the wording. His Majesty's Government were of opinion that the Agreement did apply to Manchuria.⁽⁷⁵⁾ The argument was not pushed, and Lord Lansdowne stated in the House of Lords on the 28th March that Germany did give us to understand at the time of the negotiations that they did not consider Manchuria a place where they had influence, and that too much stress should not be laid on the apparent difference of opinion.

But whatever the view taken by Germany of the necessity for her interference, in April the German Emperor appeared anxious to push His Majesty's Government into a war in alliance with Japan against Russia.⁽⁷⁶⁾ He described His Majesty's Government to Sir F. Lascelles as "a set of unmitigated noodles," because they had not seized the opportunity afforded by the Russo-Chinese Manchurian Agreement to assert their position in the Far East. His Majesty asserted that the Japanese were "furious with England" for not giving them active support; that he greatly feared such an opportunity would not occur again, and that in three years [*i.e.*, in 1904] Russia would be supreme in that part of the world.

His Majesty at the same time expressed himself as greatly hurt because one of His Majesty's Ministers had expressed the belief that His Majesty had entered into some secret understanding with Russia, "and this, after all he had done to cultivate the most friendly relations with England, he could only regard as an insult."

During April of this year Dr. Stuebel, Director of the Colonial Department of the German Foreign Office, came to London and had a series of interviews with Lord Lansdowne and with Mr. Bertie, with the object of advocating an immediate increase of 5 per cent. to the Chinese Customs Tariff, so as to provide security for a large loan for indemnity purposes, the German claim being estimated at £20,000,000.⁽⁷⁷⁾ His Majesty's Government did not encourage this suggestion, and Dr. Stuebel's want of success caused considerable disappointment to the German Government, who spoke of his proposals as having met with "a curt refusal."⁽⁷⁸⁾

A little later the Russian Government suggested to the French and German Governments a joint loan to China by those Powers, and Baron Eckhardstein informed His Majesty's Government of the suggestion and of the danger of Germany accepting it, as she was anxious to "drop" China.⁽⁷⁹⁾ Lord Lansdowne presumed that this meant that she wished to "drop" His Majesty's Government also. The loan was not arranged, and the negotiations with regard to the payment of the indemnities lasted through the year. The point upon which His Majesty's Government laid most stress was the necessity of including in the arrangements some provision which would

(70) Mr. Hardinge, No. 126, Secret, November 2, 1900.

(71) No. 34, January 25, 1901.

(72) Sir F. Lascelles, No. 46, Very Confidential, February 26, 1901. [I. Vol. II, No. 31, p. 25, *Ed.*]

(73) To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 67, Very Secret, Telegraphic, March 8. [V. Vol. II, No. 50, p. 41, *Ed.*]

(74) Sir F. Lascelles, No. 17, Telegraphic, March 14.

(75) To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 79, Telegraphic, March 16, 1901.

(76) Sir F. Lascelles, No. 24, April 10, 1901.

(77) To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 122, April 3, 1901.

(78) Sir F. Lascelles, No. 25, Telegraphic, April 10.

(79) To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 144, April 23, 1901.

preclude China from hereafter making separate arrangements with some individual Power for the repayment of her share of the debt. The object desired was to make it difficult for the Chinese Government to be coerced into alienating territory or conferring exclusive privileges in consideration of the remission of portions of the debt.

These views were fully explained to the German Embassy, and we had every reason to believe that they were concurred in by the German Government.⁽⁸⁰⁾

Nevertheless, when the Protocol, which was being drafted by the Representatives of the Powers at Peking, was nearly complete, the German Representative supported the Russian Minister in voting for the omission of the clause framed with the above objects.

Ottoman Empire.

No mention has hitherto been made of the relations between Great Britain and Germany in regard to the Ottoman Empire. In so far as both Powers have desired to maintain the existence, at any rate, of that Empire, their policy has been upon the same lines, although Germany has generally adopted a milder attitude than Great Britain in demanding the redress of wrongs suffered by the Christian population of Turkey.

But Great Britain is more directly affected by the determination of Germany to obtain control over the railway system of Asia Minor. In that part of the Ottoman Empire only one British Railway Company, the Smyrna-Aidin Railway Company, survived, and in 1897-98 Germany made an energetic effort to obtain certain Concessions for their Anatolian Railway Company, which would have ruined the Smyrna-Aidin Company. Members of the Council of State were bribed to vote in favour of the Concessions, but the scheme was defeated by a strong protest on the part of Her Majesty's Ambassador.⁽⁸¹⁾ His Excellency reported at the same time that the Deutsche Bank were endeavouring to oust the Ottoman Bank from their position of Financial Advisers to the Porte. Having been unable to ruin the Smyrna-Aidin Company the German Company endeavoured, but without success, to buy up their railway; they did, however, succeed in preventing them from obtaining a Concession for the extension of their line.

Bagdad Railway.

In 1899 the Anatolian Railway Company, whose existing line was from Haider Pasha (opposite Constantinople) to Konieh, obtained a Concession in principle for the extension of their line to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf; the possible terminus of the line was thought to be Koweit, a State with which Great Britain has long had special, though not very clearly defined, relations. Her Majesty's Government offered no opposition to the Concession, and the participation of British capital was desired by the German Company, but definite negotiations began somewhat later.

Koweit.

During the year 1901 the interest of Germany in the Bagdad Railway induced her to show considerable jealousy of our position at Koweit. His Majesty's Government had always recognised that Turkey had some vague form of sovereignty over this territory, but in 1898 had been disposed to accept the Sheikh's invitation to declare a British Protectorate. Sir N. O'Connor thought, however, that very serious diplomatic complications might ensue, and recommended the alternative of a Secret Agreement with the Sheikh. At this stage decisive action was precipitated by the rumour of Russia having obtained a Concession for a railway from Tripoli in Syria to Koweit.

On the 23rd January, 1899, an Agreement, to be kept absolutely secret, was signed by the Sheikh, who pledged himself to cede no territory and receive no foreign Representative without the sanction of Her Majesty's Government. In return he received a promise of the good offices of Her Majesty's Government and payment of a sum of 15,000 rupees. The Government of India were also authorised to prevent by force any attempt on the part of the Turks to attack Koweit.

In 1901 the status of Koweit was brought into prominence by the quarrels of the Sheikh with the neighbouring Amir of Nejd. Some fighting took place: Turkish interference seemed imminent, and both Sheikhs and Amir applied for the establishment of a British Protectorate.

The Viceroy of India recommended that a Protectorate over Koweit should be declared, but His Majesty's Government decided against this course, as likely to involve great difficulties and embarrassments.⁽⁸²⁾

At the same time, when a Turkish force seemed likely to be sent to overpower the Sheikh, His Majesty's Government warned the Porte that they would prevent such an attack, if necessary by force, and they sent a cruiser to Koweit. The Commander of a Turkish ship which was also sent to the spot reported that the British Captain was about to land men and proclaim a Protectorate.

⁽⁸⁰⁾ Memorandum for the King, August 10, 1901. [V. Vol. II, No. 104 *encl.*, p. 93.]

⁽⁸¹⁾ Sir P. Currie, No. 27, January 14, 1898.

⁽⁸²⁾ India Office, June 14, 1901.

On this story the German Government founded a protest to His Majesty's Government, and stated that they would consider such a proceeding an unfriendly act and an infraction of the Treaty of Berlin.⁽⁸³⁾ They were told that His Majesty's Government had no intention of proclaiming a Protectorate; that they would not object to Koweit being made the terminus of the Bagdad Railway, but that a previous understanding on this point would be indispensable, and that we had "certain agreements" with the Sheikh.

Subsequently to these explanations the German Ambassador recurred to the subject, and mentioned that the German Government had always held strongly that Koweit formed part of the Ottoman dominions.⁽⁸⁴⁾

Sir N. O'Connor reported that in his negotiations with the Minister for Foreign Affairs on this occasion the latter showed that he had been instructed to defend energetically the sovereign rights of the Sultan over Koweit, and to hint that the Ottoman Government would regard our direct interference on behalf of the Sheikh as an unwarrantable aggression.⁽⁸⁵⁾

In this attitude, as Sir N. O'Connor believed, the Porte was "stiffened" by advice from the German, and probably also the Russian, Embassies.

Bagdad Railway.

On the 21st January, 1902, the Porte signed the Concession to the Anatolian Railway Company for the extension of their line to Bagdad and the Persian Gulf, and throughout the next two years negotiations were proceeding between France, Germany, Turkey and Great Britain, as well as between His Majesty's Government and various financial houses, with regard to the share to be taken by the respective Powers in this "Bagdad Railway." The attitude of His Majesty's Government was summed up by Lord Lansdowne, in a letter to Sir E. Cassel of the 4th February, 1903, as follows:—

"We are favourably disposed towards the project, and should regard it as most undesirable that it should be carried out without our concurrence and without a sufficient participation on the part of this country in the construction, administration, and control of the line."

The Russian Government, on the other hand, considered that this scheme was intended to give Germany a dangerous predominance in Asia Minor, and the suggested participation of His Majesty's Government met with much criticism in this country.⁽⁸⁶⁾

Ultimately, His Majesty's Government decided that the proposals made to Great Britain did not give sufficient security for the international control of the line and the prevention of preferential treatment being given to one Power. They therefore intimated that they could not give the assurances for which they had been asked, either as to the conveyance of the Indian mails, facilities at Koweit, or the appropriation of a part of the Turkish Customs revenue in aid of the contemplated guarantee. The Prime Minister announced this decision to the House of Commons on the 23rd April, and in doing so stated that the Convention between the Porte and the Anatolian Railway Company left the whole scheme of railway development through Asia Minor to the Persian Gulf entirely in the hands of a Company under German control. To such a Convention His Majesty's Government had never been asked to assent, and could not in any case be a party.

Mr. Chamberlain and Count von Bülow.

It is not, perhaps, out of place to mention here an incident which occurred at the beginning of January 1902, and, although unconnected with any particular negotiations, created a good deal of feeling at the time. Mr. Chamberlain, in a speech at Edinburgh, replied to the insulting criticisms of the German press on the conduct of the British army in South Africa by stating that the measures to which we were obliged to resort were less severe than those employed by the German army in France in 1870.

The speech evoked a violent outburst of indignation in Germany, and the outburst was practically indorsed by Count von Bülow in a speech to the Reichstag. The subject was discussed more than once in that Assembly, as well as by the German press, in the strongest language; but Mr. Chamberlain's refusal to withdraw what he had said had the effect of producing a moderation of tone in Germany.

Shanghai.

During 1902 the time came for the evacuation of Shanghai by the Powers (Germany, France, Japan, and Great Britain), who had sent forces there to prevent disturbances in 1900. The date proposed was the 1st November.

⁽⁸³⁾ To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 306, September 3, 1901.

⁽⁸⁴⁾ To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 337, October 16.

⁽⁸⁵⁾ No. 310, Confidential, August 20.

⁽⁸⁶⁾ To Sir C. Scott, April 14, 1903. [V. Vol. II, No. 217, p. 188, *Ed.*]

The German Government put forward, as conditions upon which they would agree to evacuation on that date⁽⁸⁷⁾—

1. On a previous arrangement being come to for simultaneous and uniform evacuation.
2. Reservation of the right, if any other Power proceeded in the future to reoccupy Shanghai, to take a similar step.
3. The Peking Government and the Yang-tsze Viceroys should engage not to grant to any Power special advantages of a political, military, maritime or economic nature, nor to allow the occupation of any other points commanding the river, either above or below Shanghai.

The German Government, without informing His Majesty's Government, communicated the three conditions to the Chinese Government, obtained their assent and persuaded them to keep the matter secret. They also informed the French Government, in such a manner as to convince them of the truth of the statement, that Sir James Mackay, in the course of his commercial negotiations with China, had tried to obtain the consent of the Viceroy of Nanking to the eventual occupation by England of Chinkiang and the Kiang-Yin forts.⁽⁸⁸⁾

His Majesty's Government strongly deprecated the adoption of the German conditions by the other Powers⁽⁸⁹⁾ and at the same time informed Prince Ch'ing that His Majesty's Government "deeply resented his conduct," and that they would pay no regard to pledges given by the Chinese Government or Viceroy limiting their entire freedom of action in the future as regards the maintenance of order and protection of British interests in the Yang-tsze region.⁽⁹⁰⁾ They pressed the Chinese Government and the Viceroy of Wuchang to sign no Agreement containing the obnoxious German condition.

On the 3rd November the German Ambassador stated that his Government had dropped the third condition, having received satisfactory assurances from the Chinese Government to the effect that they could not waive their sovereign and territorial rights in favour of any other Power, not only in the Yang-tsze Valley, but throughout the Empire.⁽⁹¹⁾ His Majesty's Government replied that they were not a party to this arrangement, and did not consider themselves affected by it.⁽⁹²⁾

In discussing the matter with His Majesty's Chargé d'Affaires at Berlin, Baron Richthofen took the opportunity of delivering "a somewhat violent harangue" on the subject of the visit of the Boer Generals to Germany, and expressed himself aggrieved that His Majesty's Government had not shown a proper sense of gratitude for the attitude which the Imperial Government had adopted on that occasion, and in preventing Mr. Kruger's visit to Berlin in 1900.⁽⁹³⁾

German Emperor.

On the 14th November, a conversation took place between the German Emperor and Lord Lansdowne, in which the main topic was the question of the Dardanelles. His Imperial Majesty said that he understood that His Majesty's Government "did not care a damn" for it, but when told that this was not the fact, and that His Majesty's Government contemplated a discussion of the subject with Italy and Austria, he said that Germany would be ready to take part.

His Imperial Majesty also mentioned that he had asked Lord Salisbury many years ago to assist him in obtaining a coaling station in China, but that he had received a snub for his pains. He had therefore been obliged to help himself. It was absolutely necessary for the development of Germany that she should have coaling stations.

Venezuela.

Very shortly after this (1902) Great Britain and Germany were acting in concert, in order to obtain the satisfaction of their respective claims against Venezuela; and the two Powers, who were joined by Italy, blockaded the Venezuelan ports. In spite of the unpopularity in this country of our association with Germany, it brought about a recognition by the German Government of the loyalty with which His Majesty's Government had acted towards them in the face of considerable difficulties.

Canada.

During the year 1903 the commercial relations between Germany and Canada came prominently under discussion.

Under the Customs Tariff of 1897, Canada offered preferential Tariff advantages to any country fulfilling certain conditions of reciprocity, and as the United Kingdom already fulfilled

⁽⁸⁷⁾ Baron Eckhardstein, October 7, 1902.

⁽⁸⁸⁾ Sir E. Satow, Nos. 304 and 306, *Telegraphic*, October 15. [V. Vol. II, No. 154, p. 141, *Ed.*]

⁽⁸⁹⁾ To Baron Eckhardstein, October 11.

⁽⁹⁰⁾ To Sir E. Satow, No. 259, *Telegraphic*, October 16. [*Cf.* Vol. II, No. 158, p. 144, *Ed.*]

⁽⁹¹⁾ To Mr. Buchanan, No. 278, November 3, 1902. [V. Vol. II, No. 160, p. 145, *Ed.*]

⁽⁹²⁾ To Count Metternich, November 6, 1902. [V. Vol. II, No. 161, p. 146, *Ed.*]

⁽⁹³⁾ Mr. Buchanan, No. 224, November 4.

these conditions, British goods received the benefit of the reduced Tariff.⁽⁹⁴⁾ But by the Treaty of 1865, between Great Britain and the German Zollverein, German goods were entitled to the same treatment in British Colonies as British goods, and the German Government having made a claim to this effect, the Canadian Government asked that they might be freed from these stipulations. The Treaty of 1865 was accordingly denounced by Her Majesty's Government on the 30th July, 1897, and expired on the 30th July, 1898. Early in 1898 the Canadian Tariff Act was amended, and after the 1st August of that year preferential treatment in Canada was expressly confined to Great Britain and certain British Colonies, the ordinary Canadian Tariff being applied impartially to all foreign countries.

On the 11th June, 1898, the German Bundesrath sanctioned the proposal to continue most-favoured-nation treatment to Great Britain and her Colonies and possessions—Canada alone excepted.

Representations were, at the instance of Canada, made by Her Majesty's Government to the German Government, and it was pointed out that Canada gave Germany the same privileges as she accorded to other Powers. The negotiations continued for five years without result. During all this period most-favoured-nation treatment was continued to Great Britain, but in April of 1903 the German Government intimated that, if other Colonies followed the example of Canada, Germany might find it impossible to accord most-favoured-nation treatment to Great Britain any longer.⁽⁹⁵⁾ In the same month Canada took measures of retaliation by raising their Tariff against Germany.

Since then the position has remained unchanged: most-favoured-nation treatment has been continued to Great Britain, and unsuccessful negotiations have been carried on with Germany both through His Majesty's Government and semi-officially by Canada herself. His Majesty's Government have not, however, held the view that the attitude of Germany was altogether unreasonable.

German Emperor on English Press.

Towards the end of 1903 the German Emperor took an opportunity, in conversation with Sir F. Lascelles, of recurring to the hostility shown towards himself by the English press, in spite of his "constant attempts to bring about a good understanding between the two countries," but he admitted that the attitude of His Majesty's Government was perfectly correct.⁽⁹⁶⁾

East Africa.

In Africa during the last two years the various frontier negotiations have proceeded, on the whole, smoothly; in Zanzibar a fresh Treaty with Germany has been for some time under negotiation. Meanwhile, the Germans claim the benefit of their old Treaty, and we are not actively contesting the claim, but in any case an arrangement is in progress which will bring to an end their extra-territorial rights.

In furnishing the new Commissioner of the East African Protectorate with general instructions in July last, Lord Lansdowne was able to say: "The good relations which happily exist between the Protectorate and the neighbouring German possessions will insure the minimum of friction in any frontier questions which may possibly arise. . . . In all matters of common interests on the frontier you should endeavour to act fully and cordially with the Governor and other authorities of German East Africa."⁽⁹⁷⁾

Egypt.

In Egypt, the Agreement with France of April last led to some negotiation with Germany and other Powers, whose assent was required to the Khedivial Decree by which His Majesty's Government desired to reorganise the service of the Egyptian Debt.

The German Government wished to make their consent dependent on the settlement of certain outstanding questions; these were the German claims on account of losses during the disturbances in Samoa; compensation for German losses during the war in South Africa, the offer of £90,000 being considered unsatisfactory; the settlement of the commercial relations between the two countries, and of the difference with regard to Canada; also, if not otherwise arranged, the claims of the German bondholders of the Netherlands South African Railway Company. The German Government also required certain privileges for their subjects in Egypt.

The German Government, moreover, prompted the Austrian Government to put forward conditions. Eventually, however, both Governments gave the required consent in return for some small concessions, which were confined to Egyptian matters. The matter of the Netherland South African Railway Company was settled soon afterwards.

⁽⁹⁴⁾ To Mr. Buchanan, June 20, 1903.

⁽⁹⁵⁾ To Mr. Buchanan, July 8, 1903.

⁽⁹⁶⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 30, Very Confidential.

⁽⁹⁷⁾ To Sir D. Stewart, July 8, 1904.

Thibet.

At Peking there has been but little friction during the last two years, except that during the negotiations respecting the Thibet Agreement the German Minister questioned the Wai-wu Pu on the subject in a manner which Sir E. Satow considered tantamount to a threat of opposition. The "Times" correspondent also accused the German Minister of opposing the Treaty, and his reports excited a great show of indignation on the part not only of the German press, but of the German Government. A denial was published in the organ of the German Government, the explanation given being that the German Minister had merely questioned the Wai-wu Pu as to the accuracy of a version of the Agreement reproduced in a Chinese paper, and had stated that Germany took no sort of interest in the matter.⁽⁹⁸⁾ The German Minister had, however, previously mentioned to Sir E. Satow that the Agreement infringed German most-favoured-nation rights; and Lord Lansdowne was of opinion that the inquiry which the Minister made afforded the Chinese Government a pretext for obstruction.⁽⁹⁹⁾

The specific questions at issue between the two Governments are not at the present moment of great importance, except perhaps that of their commercial relations; but it is evident that the German Emperor and his Government are not less suspicious than in former years of the intentions of His Majesty's Government, for on Christmas Eve Count von Bülow, in conversation with Sir F. Lascelles, referred to the strong belief entertained by the German Emperor and Government that England was about to attack Germany.⁽¹⁰⁰⁾

J. A. C. TILLEY.

January 5, 1905.

⁽⁹⁸⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 227, October 21, 1904.

⁽⁹⁹⁾ To Sir F. Lascelles, No. 53, Telegraphic, October 24.

⁽¹⁰⁰⁾ Sir F. Lascelles, No. 32, Telegraphic, Secret, December 25, 1904.

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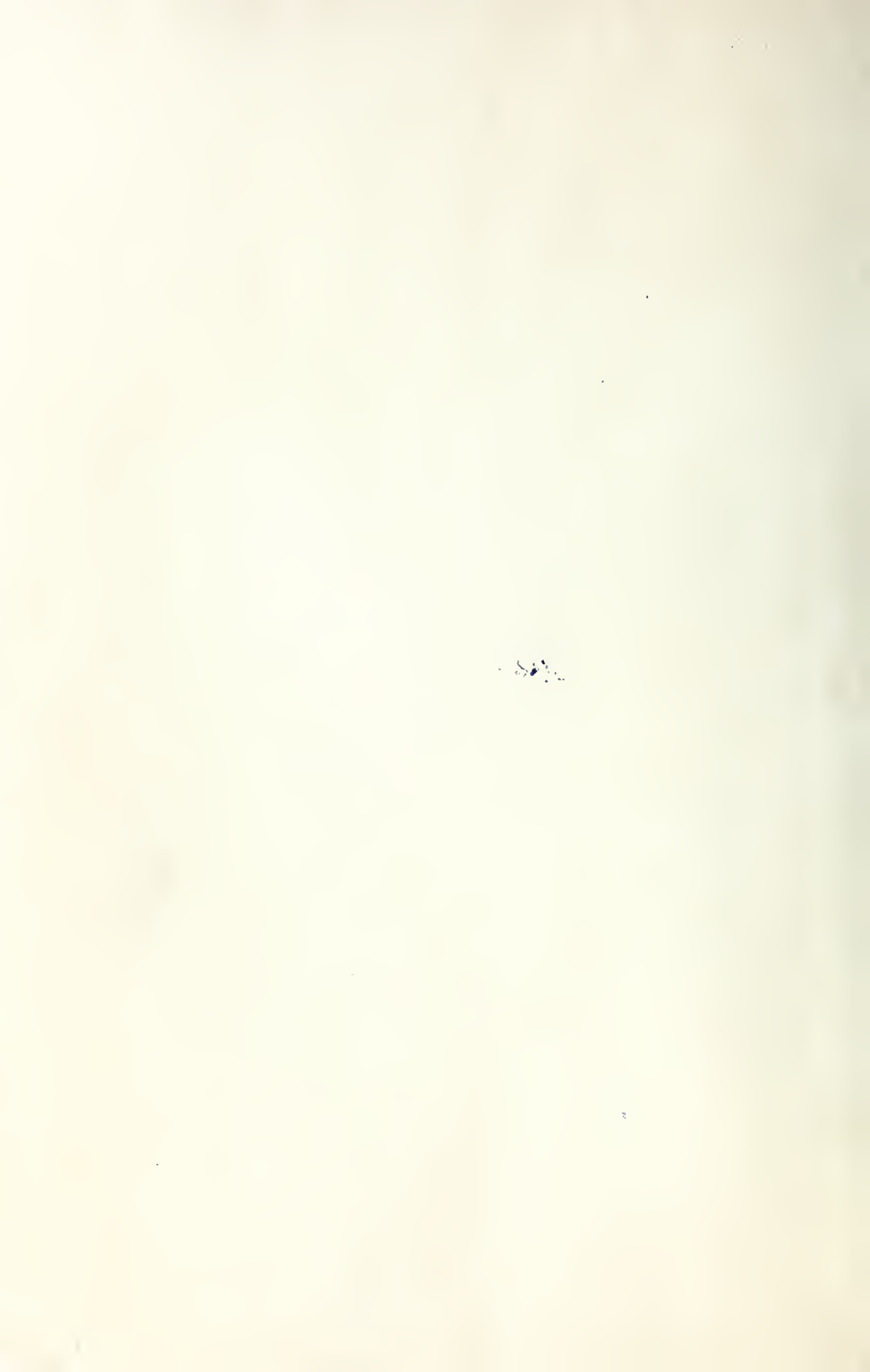
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